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SOLON & CROESUS

And other Greek Essays

BY
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PREFACE

THE essays which form the body of this volume were written at the time when I was feeling my way towards the general view of Greek life that I worked out later in *The Greek Commonwealth*. Two of them were, in fact, originally composed as introductory chapters of that book, whilst the others embody ideas and material which its readers will readily recognise.

It is thought that, even after this lapse of time, or perhaps for that very reason, they will be of interest to present-day readers, and they are therefore reproduced substantially as they were written.

Of these six essays the only one that would seem to call for a word of comment is the last. It was written at a time when the relations between abstract economic science and historical studies had not been so fully developed as to-day, and when to confront Thucydides and the *Corpus Inscriptionum* with Bagehot, Mill and Marshall seemed an adventurous task for a young enquirer. There was a phase when "the stillness and simplicity" of abstract economics attracted me to the point of dreaming of a political economy

of the City-State. But I eventually decided that, however indispensable the discipline of economic theory may be for the student of antiquity, it is even less possible to separate politics from economics in the study of the ancient world than it is for that of to-day. Hence, when I came to write out what I had to say, economic forces took up only one-half of the volume, and the treatment adopted for them was after all dynamic rather than static. Those who have dealt with the subject since, notably Glotz and Rostovtzeff, evidently came to the same conclusion, whether or not they arrived at it by the same route as I.

I have added an introductory essay arising out of more recent preoccupations, for which I would bespeak the particular attention of all those, whether Greek-trained or not, who value the survival in our post-war society of that respect for the life of the mind which is inseparably associated with the Greek tradition.

I am indebted to the editor of the *Sociological Review* and to Mr. Geoffrey Whitworth, late editor of the *Open Window*, respectively, for permission to reprint *Was Greek Civilization based on Slave Labour?* and *History as an Art*.

A. Z.

July, 1928.

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INTRODUCTION

SOLON AND CROESUS

THE Greeks are our masters in civilization. It is to them that mankind, or at least the Western world, has been accustomed to turn for guidance at the opening of each new phase in its history. Individuals in all ages have found in them confirmation of their love of wisdom or of beauty or of excellence in some other of its many forms. But side by side with these individual Hellenists, whose spirits encounter one another across the ages, every particular conjuncture of the world's affairs discloses for those who live in communion with the Greeks some element in that heritage which is specially relevant to their own difficulties.

The ten years that have elapsed since the close of the Great War have shown us very clearly what we most need from the Greeks to-day. It is their sense of the responsibilities of thought.

Imagine, not Socrates or Plato, but an average member of the audience that judged the plays of the great dramatists, returned to life and studying the structure and conditions of the modern world! What would be the first thing that would strike him? Surely the complete trans-

formation of the material conditions of human existence. That he could enter a steam-drawn carriage at Athens and find himself within three days in a hyperborean metropolis, that he could even, if he wished, make the journey in a non-stop flight in a single day, would certainly excite in him that wonder which Aristotle described as the beginning of an education in natural science. But when he turned to enquire to whom mankind was indebted for these marvels and observed the contrast between the position accorded in the community to these benefactors of the human race and that of those in whose hands they had let slip the keys of such riches and power, his wonder would surely increase tenfold, and he would ask himself whether an age in which thought was held of so little account was worthy to be considered civilised at all.

The successors of Pythagoras and Archimedes, whose researches, from the seventeenth century onwards, have led to this change in the outward form of the world's life, assumed a responsibility of which neither men of science, individually or collectively, nor mankind in general seems yet to have become aware. Labouring quietly in their laboratories, withdrawn from the clamours of the crowd whose conditions of existence they are revolutionising, their whole being bent on the task of pushing back bit by bit the boundaries of human ignorance, they have been triumphantly loyal to the disciple of Science; but they

have forgotten that other loyalty which was the master passion of the Greek devotees of knowledge. In serving the goddess of Truth they have forgotten to consider their neighbour. They have neglected the duties of citizenship and ignored their supreme responsibility towards civilisation.

In the city of the ancients Socrates could point to the walls, the docks, the arsenals, and the other primitive paraphernalia of the riches and power of those days, and contrast them with the preoccupations of the philosopher and the scientist. Little did he dream that the day would come when the world would be filled with docks and arsenals and a millionfold more agencies of physical domination, brought into existence by his own intellectual heirs, but used for the purpose of maintaining the supremacy of the material over the spiritual.

In the civilization of Ancient Greece, men lived in homes of mud-brick, but Solon spoke to Croesus not only as equal but as master. To-day Croesus is king, in fact if not in name, and the successors of Solon, no longer law-givers, count themselves happy if they are not his hirelings. In that reversal of the two rôles lies the central problem of twentieth-century civilization.

The conditions of to-day seem only the more extraordinary when we ask how it is that Croesus has been able to secure and maintain his supremacy.

Is it by the sheer weight of material power, by overawing the representatives of intelligence and compelling them under dire necessity to become the docile executants of his orders? This, or something like this, has been, and still is the case in individual modern countries where an effort has been made to place not only all those engaged in specific intellectual tasks but the entire working population under the control of an oligarchy or a dictator. But under present-day conditions such a régime is, and always must be, the exception rather than the rule: and it cannot, in any case, survive for long in the form designed for it. The tyrant of Ancient Greece had a far longer expectation of political life than his present-day successor, for the simple reason that the world in which he lived was far nearer to the basis of brute force laid bare in his rule. A Pisistratus or a Dionysius could gain power and hold it by means of a bodyguard. But a Pretorian Guard, or even a whole personal army, is of little avail to their successors to-day. For power in the modern state is not maintained by spearmen and cavalry, or even by machine-gunners and airmen, but by the regular and adequate functioning of multifarious agencies far too complex and numerous to be directed from a single centre. The modern state, in other words, lives in and through the activity and interaction of individual minds. Its existence day by day testifies to the power of intelligent beings to

co-operate for purposes of social welfare. Every bank, every post office, every railway station, every telephone exchange is a standing tribute to the victory of mind over matter, of the invisible over the visible. It is the Greek sages and their successors who have brought the modern world into existence and provided it with the means by which its life is maintained. All the more amazing does it seem that, in this world of their own making, those who are of the lineage of Solon are found bowing the knee before the descendants of Croesus.

How then has the dynasty of Croesus secured its supremacy? Is it by tempting the thinkers away from the natural region of their thought and persuading them to spend their powers upon more mundane enquiries? The immense advance made in the practical applications of scientific discovery during recent generations might seem at first sight to lend force to this supposition. It is indeed true that thousands and tens of thousands of technically equipped brainworkers are to-day engaged in superintending and facilitating the use of scientific inventions. But it is a mistake to think that their work is a substitute for the labours of the study and the laboratory. The manufacturing chemist and the radiographer are not charlatans who have seized the place and lowered the standards of a Perkin or a Röntgen. They typify new professional occupations which have been brought into

existence through the work of abstract thinkers and depend upon them for their continuance.

One is tempted at first sight to imagine that the present generation, perched securely on the shoulders of the giants of the past, has only to go on using and applying the existing stock of knowledge in order to enable the work of the world to be carried on indefinitely as it is to-day. But this is to fall into a mode of thinking—if thinking it can be called—only too characteristic of an age of material acquisitiveness. Those who reason in this way treat knowledge as a commodity that can be collected and stored, like ingots in the vault of a bank. And it is true that the grosser materials and instruments of knowledge can be gathered together and made conveniently accessible in this way. The libraries and museums, the encyclopædias and dictionaries, the catalogues, bibliographies, documentary collections and other large-scale learned enterprises which are so marked a feature of the intellectual life of the present age, as they were of that of the Alexandrians, keep the student of to-day, for whose help they are designed, ever mindful of the great advances that have been and are still being made in the provision of what may be called the comforts and conveniences of the scholar's life. But they will not help but only hinder him in his real work unless he is careful to remember, as he verifies his references or jots down new titles into his notebook, that knowledge is by its very

nature incapable of being stored. What can be preserved in a book and even, according to the modern practice, extracted and distilled on to a card, is not knowledge itself, but a signpost to knowledge. Knowledge itself exists nowhere but in the living mind, through which alone dead material assumes life and reality. As well imagine that a Beethoven symphony exists on the written score or on the roll of a piano-player as believe that the mind of a Descartes or a Newton or an Einstein can be cribbed, cabined and confined within a printed page.

No one lived with a more constant sense of this than the greatest of all the masters of Greek thought. "Take heed," he writes in one of those letters whose genuineness seems now at last to be fully established, "lest these words fall into the hands of uneducated persons: for there is hardly anything which is likely to seem to them fitter for ridicule, yet, on the other hand, more marvellous or inspiring to those who are gifted for their understanding. What has been spoken and heard repeatedly and with difficulty over a long course of years becomes purified, like gold, after much labour. And the result is sometimes amazing. For there are men, and not a few, who have heard these things, and are capable of learning them, and of committing them to memory and of testing and judging them in every possible way, who after they have attained old age and have been listeners for over thirty years

declare that what used to seem to them most incredible now appears most clear and worthy of belief, and that what used to seem credible is now so no longer. Be careful, therefore, to avoid unworthy pronouncements, lest you repent of them later. *The best safeguard is not to write but to go on learning till the end*; in writing it is impossible not to fall occasionally below the true level. That is why I myself have never written about these matters and why there are no works of Plato and never will be, all that is said being put into the mouth of Socrates in his young manhood. Farewell," he concludes, "and follow my counsel. First read this letter through many times and then burn it." ¹

We may be grateful to Dionysius, to whom the letter was addressed, for disobeying the instruction and allowing this personal testimony to survive the ages. It explains why Plato, like Jesus, preferred to give the best of his mind, not to writing but to "unwritten teaching," to a group of chosen pupils, why, as his latest British biographer reminds us, he "habitually lectured without notes," so that of his most famous lecture, that on "The Good," no less than five separate auditors published individual recollections. Yet, such is his teaching power, even beyond the grave, that the signposts that he has left in his dialogues have inspired a chosen band in generation after generation to undertake the

¹Ep. II, Steph. 314. See A. E. Taylor: *Plato*, 1927, p. 15.

effort of thinking their way through the material according to his own indications and "going on learning to the end," so that to be a Platonist still signifies, not adherence to a fixed doctrine, but a soul that has felt the call to spread its wings in the search for spiritual reality.

Civilization then, if we are to believe the founder of the Academy, and of all Academies, consists neither in the accumulation of knowledge, nor in the perfecting of institutions, still less in the development of material inventions and conveniences. Civilization, as bequeathed to us by the Greeks, is a possession of the spirit : and its continuing element, both in the world as a whole and in individual communities, is the presence at any one time of a sufficient proportion of civilized persons—that is, of men and women who have individually made the effort to absorb, and, as it were, live over again in their own wider experience, the thought of their predecessors in civilization. This is the only true sense in which we can speak of a civilized world or a civilized community. And the only valid test of political, social and (let it be added) economic institutions is whether they are such as to provide the community with an assured succession of such individuals. Abridge or limit this succession and a process of decadence will inevitably set in. Not only thought itself will wither and decay, but the whole imposing superstructure of material wealth and power, the docks

and the arsenals, the banks and the exchanges, will be touched with the same paralysis. For human affairs, like physical bodies, do not continue their accustomed movement when the impulse which has set them in motion has died down. History shows us more than one example of a community which relied for the continuance of its civilization upon the momentum of past activity rather than upon the living effort of the present. For all its mounting statistics, our twentieth-century society will pass into the same gray shadow if those who direct its fortunes forget that the maintenance of living thought, the promotion of the fundamental studies and their discipline, embodied in a sufficient succession of individual thinkers, is the principal condition of its life.

If Croesus then seeks to tempt men away from abstract to applied studies, from the realm of theory to the realm of practice, he is acting contrary to the welfare of society and taking a short-sighted view of his own material interests. That such a tendency exists is undeniable and has recently been confirmed by careful investigations in individual countries. Testimony has been published showing that those who are carrying on the tradition of abstract thought and inquiry, both in the humanities and in natural science, are finding their laboratories and lecture rooms depleted, whilst students flock readily to teachers who can open to them the

road to professional advancement and material success.

But the increasing disproportion which is thus produced between the devotees of the fundamental and the applied sciences does not touch the heart of the problem. Particularly striking though it is in these post-war years, it is not a new phenomenon. It was as familiar to Socrates and Plato as to ourselves. Gorgias the rhetorician was a greater attraction than Socrates, the critic of his phrases ; and Isocrates, the founder of journalism, was a more fashionable name than Plato. That the appeal of thought should be lost on the many and heard only by the few is only to be expected. The society of to-day, like other civilized societies before it, could carry on its work with the aid of those few. The real problem concerns the condition and activities of those few.

What is the position in the world of to-day of those who, in the succession of which we have spoken, have felt what can only be called the vocation of thought ?

At first sight it might seem as though they had little of which to complain. Never have their instruments of labour been so manifold or so perfected. Never has there been such an imposing abundance of laboratories and libraries, of academies and congresses, of public recognition and honorific distinctions. Never was the outward prestige of recognised intellectual success so great as it is to-day. Never before were

scientists and philosophers interviewed by pressmen on any and every subject or paraded before the multitude as wondrous prodigies of human achievement. If they fail to attract as many recruits as their more mundane colleagues, at least they receive compensation in the shape of newspaper popularity. And if they feel, as feel they must, that, in spite of compulsory schooling and universal literacy, the gulf between their thought and that of the man in the street is far greater than that between Socrates and the man in the Athenian market-place, at least they have the satisfaction of knowing that no democratic government to-day would dare to offer them the cup of hemlock.

Yet, as we all know in our hearts, these tokens of homage, however well meant, testify, not to the power of thought in the present-day world, but rather to its weakness. They are hardly even tributes of respect, or, if of respect, of respect tinged with condescension and a certain pity. They are the consolation prizes offered by a world whose real admiration is bestowed elsewhere, to the lords of a realm, mysterious indeed and even romantic, but quite certainly uninhabitable by ordinary mortals. Thus in the present-day encounter between Solon and Croesus, the rôles are ironically reversed. Solon is decked out with titles and decorations and signs of outward honour; but the voice that commands is the voice of Croesus.

And what commands he issues ! We have become so much accustomed, in these latter days, to material standards that we have almost lost our sense of the daily martyrdom of truth ; and those who watch it at close quarters and even participate in its processes are apt to be too much ashamed, or hardened, or perhaps absorbed in a realm of their own to which they have retired for refuge, to proclaim their sufferings to mankind. Yet, in an age which spends millions on the external trappings of knowledge, which has replaced the close spiritual communion embodied in the Academy of antiquity and the *Universitas* of the Middle Ages by grandiose material structures called, and too often miscalled, by the same names, it is not only a duty to the republic of thinkers but an urgent civic obligation to draw attention to the conditions under which they are compelled to live. If the reservoirs which supplied a city with water were being secretly poisoned, the whole public would be astir, the culprits exposed and punished, and the danger laid once and for all. But when the wells of truth upon which the modern city depends for its moral health are being continuously tampered with, when the agencies of opinion, and even of thought, are being imperceptibly diverted from their true function and exploited for private profit or ambition or even baser and pettier motives, the public cannot take the initiative because, even if dimly conscious

of the evil, it is powerless to probe it to its source.

There is no law against lapses from intellectual integrity. To distort or suppress the truth for interested reasons is not, and could not be made, a statutory offence. But it is something infinitely graver than that. It is a breach of the unwritten convention upon which the world's intellectual life depends. Truthfulness is in the intellectual realm what honesty is in the economic. Where good faith, complete and entire, is in doubt, or can even be conceived to be in doubt, the psychological basis of credit is shaken and business dealings become impossible. So it is in the world of thought. The mere suspicion that a writer or a teacher is allowing, or is capable of allowing, his judgment to be influenced by something other than intellectual rectitude is almost a sentence of banishment from that kingdom of the spirit. Without a complete assurance of good faith, in this realm as in the other, discussion is impossible and intercourse ceases. The outward form and semblance of intellectual activity may indeed remain. Degrees and titles and ceremonial occasions may abound. But they will not be tributes to a true activity of the spirit. They will but serve to deck out an elaborate sham, which every scholar who respects himself will be eager to shun.

Yet it is exactly this sham, this parade of intellectuality and its use for interested purposes,

of which Croesus has always sought to take advantage : and conditions in the modern world have singularly facilitated his efforts. Socrates well knew the danger. "The whole of which rhetoric is a part," he told Gorgias, "is not an art at all, but the habit of a bold and ready wit, which knows how to manage mankind. This habit I sum up under the word 'flattery.'" In a society in which money standards are predominant "bold and ready wits" are objects worth buying by those who seek a quick and easy way to "manage mankind." The art of buying and using them has been carried to a pitch of which Socrates could never have conceived : and so has the kindred art of "managing mankind" through the exploitation of this intellectual servility.

Knowledge, as we have seen, cannot be stored. Neither can it be bought and sold. Truth cannot be offered a consideration. Confront her with a price for her services and she shrinks away abashed. The method of the thinker is the method of the artist. What he has to say comes from within, in its own form and at its own time. When it has found its form and expression, it belongs to the world : and it is for the spreaders of good tidings to make it known. In that sense the publisher, and even the circulation manager, is an evangelist. But it is not for the evangelist to compose the message. To give the world what it needs is the task of its finest spirits in

every age. To give the public what it wants is the preoccupation of Croesus. Between the two no accommodation is possible. Wisdom and rhetoric, truth and flattery, Socrates and Gorgias, are opposites that no ingenuity can reconcile. White and black they always have been : white and black they will remain.

Consider for a moment some of the methods by which Croesus worms his way into the citadel of truth. Universities were established to be seats of learning, the home of those who have chosen the vocation of thought and the kindred vocation of teaching. But in the modern world the thinker requires equipment. He cannot sit in the roadside like an Indian sage, or even preach in the open, like the masters of old. He needs a building, a library, a laboratory : he needs facilities for travel and intercourse. If he studies mankind, he needs to see mankind. If he studies Nature, his needs, in the present stage of the natural sciences, may be even more exacting. At once he is forced back upon the realm of Croesus, or, at least, upon that region of University administration which is half-way towards the realm of Croesus. It is the business of a University administrator to provide for the needs of the thinkers and teachers under his charge without interfering with their activity. If he fails to meet their needs, he is an unsuccessful administrator. If he interferes with their activity, even to the smallest degree, he is false to

his trust towards the *Universitas* of knowledge. In a world in which Croesus and his standards are supreme, his task becomes daily more difficult and more thankless. So it is not surprising that, in some countries where intellectual standards are still maintained, academic administrators tend to be unsuccessful, so that thinkers and teachers are living in chronic embarrassment and even in squalor, whilst in others, where the canons of the spirit are held of less account, the authorities have frankly adopted business methods and standards, and preserved the semblance of a University at the cost of its reality. When such is the case, Croesus does not require to command. It is enough for him to whisper. Considerations of discretion begin to intrude into extra-academic activities, thence into published writings, thence into class-room teaching, thence into private conversation, and finally into that dialogue of the soul with itself which is the innermost sanctity of thought. Long before that stage is reached, the vocation has been abandoned, or rather, it has been exchanged for another, that of diplomacy. The modern world is full of professors and doctors, wearing all the outward insignia of the life of learning, who, like the unbelieving clerics familiar from nineteenth-century fiction, have drifted into a life of hardened falsehood. Such types are indeed almost more to be pitied than to be blamed: too often they started on their intellectual career without

any true sense of vocation. Nevertheless their existence is a factor tending to debase the life of their country and institution : and if the processes through which their number is being multiplied are not counteracted, universities in the modern world may cease to be seats of learning and homes of truth and degenerate into a mere congeries of administrative and diplomatic activities.

Let us follow Croesus into another department of intellectual activity—that concerned with the diffusion of news and the formation of opinion regarding the contemporary world. To sum this up under the title of journalism would not be accurate : since journalism is a profession concerned with daily and, to a lesser extent, with weekly and monthly publications, whilst, from our more general point of view, the field to be covered is a much wider one. It includes all the processes, occasional or periodical, written or spoken, through which the citizen is kept informed, or is supposed to be kept informed, on the matters of public interest which affect the casting of his vote at election time.

Of journalism itself there is little to be said which others, recognized leaders in that realm, have not said already. What was in the nineteenth century a profession, and one of the finest and most responsible of professions, has in many countries to-day become a trade. Indeed, to use the term "trade" is almost an irony : for, whereas in the world of commerce and industry,

on both sides of the Atlantic, there has been of recent years a marked tendency to promote the development of professional standards and habits in a region where profit used to be the only unit of measurement and criterion of distinction, the processes concerned with the diffusion of news and the formation of opinion, in some countries at any rate, have been subject to precisely the opposite influences. No doubt the technical difficulties connected with journalism, and especially daily journalism, under twentieth-century conditions, render the working out of a code of professional ethics in this field extremely difficult; and no one accustomed to reading daily newspapers in several languages can withhold his tribute of admiration for the rapidity, the deftness and the general accuracy with which his needs are supplied day by day. It is when one turns from the conscientious detailed work of pure reporting to interpretation and editorship that one discovers how carefully Croesus has sought to occupy all the avenues to opinion.

“Because half-a-dozen grasshoppers under a fern,” wrote Burke in the days before large-scale press organization was dreamed of, “make the field ring with their importunate chink, whilst thousands of great cattle, reposed beneath the shadow of the British oak, chew the cud and are silent, pray do not imagine that those who make the noise are the only inhabitants of the field—that, of course, they are many in number—or

that, after all, they are other than the little, shrivelled, meagre, hopping, though loud and troublesome insects of the hour." If the warning was needed in 1790, how much more is it needed to-day, when the art of the performing grass-hopper has been developed to an astounding degree of perfection and the cattle chewing the cud seem more impassive than ever. We seem indeed, in regard to our knowledge of the world's happenings, to live in an atmosphere of perpetual chink—the chink of the news agency, of the syndicated press, of the inspired article and of the advertiser. No doubt the application of large-scale enterprise to the dissemination of news has given rise to many new professional problems on which there is much to be said on both sides. It seems at present as impossible to contemplate a system of pensions for the whole editorial staff of a paper which has changed its proprietor and its opinions as it would be to ensure them for members of Parliament who have failed of re-election; and it is therefore perhaps unfair to cast stones at the working journalists who, for the sake of their wives and families, drive their pens against their convictions. Externally viewed, their act is indeed the sin against the Holy Ghost; but, in the commercial conditions of the age, they are no more to be accounted guilty than the grocer's assistant who is compelled to sell sanded sugar or short-weight tea. The fault is in the system, not in the

individuals : and the system is the result of the intrusion of commercial standards into a realm to which they do not belong. If news is a commodity to be bought and sold, those who deal in it will emulate the virtues, and succumb to the failings, of grocers. The mistake is in allowing the public to believe that a profession which in the nineteenth century aspired to the intellectual influence of the preacher and the professor is still endeavouring to live up to the same responsibilities.

But let those who are inclined to spend their scorn on the scribes who compose for the million watch Croesus as he penetrates into higher and more exclusive regions. The increasing association of special knowledge with public affairs, whether for expert inquiries or for the ordinary work of administration, has brought with it new problems and new temptations, against which the world of thought is not yet sufficiently on its guard. Only through lack of such vigilance, and of the corporate consciousness for its exercise, can we explain the development of habits and practices which, if continued unchecked, will end not only in stripping learning of all its dignity, but in reducing its possessors once more to the position which they have so often occupied in the past, that of the slaves or hirelings of the lords of material wealth and power. In the days when the relationship between Greece and Rome was not wholly unlike that between Europe and

America to-day, men were accustomed to the spectacle of the learned slave at the elbow of his unskilful master: tame philosophers and tied experts were familiar figures in society. Later, when the barbarian replaced the Roman, and the Church preserved the heritage of culture, a Charlemagne and an Alfred would have an Alcuin and an Asser to aid them. But at least in those days ignorance paid homage to learning. Alfred brought Latin back to Wessex and Charlemagne sought, however vainly, to master the arts of reading and writing. To-day, in a world in which literacy has become general, the Philistines seem nevertheless to have acquired a new lease of authority. Thus it is not everywhere judged to be inconsistent with the tenure of an academic post for its holder to act as the paid spokesman of a business enterprise—and that not in regard to the sale of textbooks alone. Nor is it considered inappropriate but, on the contrary, a matter for congratulation, when a learned institution has succeeded in installing as its President, to supervise the activities of its doctors, masters and students, some unlettered churl, as innocent of respect for learning as of learning itself, simply because fortune has been kind to him, or rather to his pocket. Nor are institutions of University rank and periodicals of academic standing immune from the temptation to ignore the essential distinction between disinterested inquiry and subsidized

propaganda. Indeed, since the above lines were penned, an official investigation in the United States has laid bare the extraordinary ramifications of certain propagandist activities in educational circles and the extent to which teachers of University rank have been willing to place themselves under obligations to private commercial interests.¹

It is idle to multiply instances. Every lover of truth who has faced the forces of the modern world has realized in his own personal experience the pressure of the powers that be. There is not a scholar or an artist, engaged in the unequal combat, who has not many times stopped to ask himself whether the struggle is worth while—whether the price that has to be paid for remaining in the *mêlée* is not after all too high, whether he is not diminishing his individual power and corroding his gifts for the sake of a general utility that seems daily more problematical, whether, in short, in the duel between Truth and Social Necessity the former is not now definitely fated to succumb. And too often the result of such reflection has been surrender—either continuance in action with the surrender of Truth, or renunciation of action with the surrender of social idealism.

Yet, to acquiesce in such surrender is to despair of civilization itself. As we have already argued,

¹The reference is to the investigation conducted by the Federal Trade Commission into the activities of electricity, gas, telephone and rapid transit companies.

the modern world, visible as well as invisible, rests upon the labours of the thinkers. Croesus himself has no interest in promoting the processes of decadence. The means of relief exist and it is within the power of the thinkers to apply them.

But first, let us inquire a little more closely into how it is that knowledge has been reduced to this position of humiliating subservience to the masters of material power.

The reasons are many and complex, and must be sought in many realms, political, social and economic as well as intellectual. To seek to analyse them in full would carry us too far. But there are certain causes operating in the intellectual realm which are certainly not the least important, and to them we must now turn.

The weakness of those who in the present generation maintain the succession of thought is due to two main intellectual causes—the increase of the aids to knowledge and the diffusion of instruction.

We generally take it for granted that, whatever our shortcomings in other respects, at least we are superior to the Greeks in regard to the condition of our knowledge. But the justification of the claim depends upon what is meant by knowledge. No doubt an encyclopædia composed for the world of the fifth or fourth century before Christ would have been a pigmy compared with the giant productions of to-day. No doubt also the scholar of the present age, when he enters

upon the labour of thought, finds himself borne along by the momentum of the great collective effort which, during the last three centuries, has perfected the means for the development of individual branches of study. But these achievements of past thinkers and aids to present thinking, however precious for the kindred spirits who know how to make use of them, have brought with them grave dangers to the cause of knowledge itself; for they have placed fine and delicate instruments within the reach of rude and untrained hands. The very technique of specialized inquiry which has given such power to the mind of a Lorentz or an Einstein, irradiating and ennobling their whole being so that men feel instinctively that their spirits dwell like stars, in a realm apart from common everyday mankind—this very perfection of the processes of thought available to the true compeers of Plato and Aristotle has been a source of confusion and bewilderment to smaller men. The bow of Odysseus hangs ready for use by all comers; but few there are in each generation who can stretch it. And all the time there streams into the halls of the Palace of Learning, and into the multitude of separate chambers into which it has been subdivided, a motley crowd of the suitors of wisdom, some indeed humble and reverent and full of zeal, but others, both young and old, puffed up with vanity and insolence, as though the privilege of entering this shrine raised by the labours of

past generations came to them of right and had not to be earned afresh by the toil and sweat of their own minds. And more than once it has been recorded in the annals of the house that when one came with mastery on his brow, and with arms fit to stretch the bow, the crowd sought to deny him entrance or, like the Ithacans of old, let him sit apart "in a mean seat by a tiny table."¹

The accumulation of the materials for knowledge and the immense development of specialization, whilst providing better technical facilities for the true scholar, have also made his task more difficult by rendering it harder for him to remain an educated man. "The only choice before us to-day," recently remarked a veteran in the ranks of thought who is a living contradiction of his own *obiter dictum*, "is between superficiality and pedantry. To be truly educated is impossible." The dilemma is well put; and if to be superficial means not to be up to date in the latest thinking in the various branches of knowledge, it admits of no escape. No living man can keep abreast of that continuous stream. In the field of biology alone the experts compute that the average output of fresh contributions to learning amounts to about 140 a day. But the answer is, of course, that we must adjust our conception of an educated man or, in the old English phrase, "a scholar and a gentleman," to the new

¹*Od.* xx. 259.

conditions. Already in his day Aristotle laid it down that the trained mind could do its work of judging without being burdened with a mass of detailed knowledge. All the more true is it to-day. The modern scholar need not aim at knowing everything of everything ; omniscience was never yet granted to humankind, and its pale substitute, what may be called omni-reference, has been obsolete at least since the invention of printing. But neither need he know everything about something : for the newer aids will spare him even that. What is essential, if he is to be in the true succession, is that he should have mastered the discipline of thinking through some independent adventure of his own mind, in whatever nook or region, small or great, and that he should have, as an abiding possession, a sense of the unity of the world of knowledge and of his communion with the thinkers of the past. These are the touchstones of the succession.

The touchstones but not the hallmarks—for in the world of to-day men have become used to far grosser and more palpable criteria. Not only have the material aids to knowledge been multiplied a thousandfold, but the material seats of learning have undergone a similar development.

The nineteenth century was not only a period of unexampled material development. It was also the century which, for the first time in the world's history, made literacy the rule rather than the exception among the leading peoples. Future

historians may indeed look back upon this latter achievement as more far-reaching in its importance than the former. But the real significance of the change thus brought about in modern society and its lasting effects upon the development of civilization, in the true sense of the word, are as yet undetermined. Here again, as in the realm of scholarship and research, a sustained conflict is in progress between intellectual and commercial standards.

The demand for the provision of educational facilities for the mass of the people took its rise, both in Europe and North America, from the democratic movement at the end of the eighteenth century. It was a natural corollary to the doctrine of political democracy that those who were to be entrusted with political power should be equipped with the means for making use of it. Nor can any praise be too high for the devoted labours of those who, as crusaders and as teachers, have within some five generations made free and compulsory schooling part of the ordinary social inheritance of the child born into a present-day civilized community. In the United States "the little red schoolhouse" is rightly accounted one of the truest symbols of democracy. In Europe, where the tradition of social privilege has been more tenacious, the impulse has been more unequal. Scotland has different educational values from England, France from Spain, and Czecho-Slovakia from Hungary, while the Scandinavian

countries, in their relative detachment and freedom for experiment, have given the lead, in important respects, to all alike. Nevertheless the broad result has been to give a decisive impetus to the European democratic movement, not only in politics but in society generally; and if America has her Abraham Lincoln, who passed from log-cabin to White House, post-war Europe can point with equal pride to one who, born in a humble cottage in a Moravian village, has been called by his people to live the part of Plato's philosopher King, or rather philosopher President.

Looked at from this point of view, the disappearance of illiteracy in Western and Central Europe, as in North America, represents a triumph, almost unimaginable to eighteenth-century minds, for the principle of democracy. What used to be the narrowest of paths or even, in the disagreeable Victorian metaphor, a ladder, for merit and ability has become an ever-broadening highway, and the child who goes to school has a right to feel that he carries in his satchel, if not a field-marshal's baton, at least a secure passport into realms that were tightly closed to his fathers.

The fight for equal opportunities has not everywhere been won in detail. How much still remains to be done teachers and administrators in individual countries and areas know only too well. But the principle has been almost every-

where accepted, and its further and more consistent application is merely a matter of continued effort and vigilance along recognized lines.

The crucial issue to-day, in the field of education, is no longer whether opportunities are to be afforded to the mass of the people. It is as to the quality of the education that is to be provided for them. It is not a question of quantity, but of standards.

Perhaps the simplest way of stating the problem is by taking a Greek example.

The audience which assembled in the theatre of Dionysus to adjudicate on the plays of a Sophocles or an Aristophanes was illiterate. It watched the action and listened to the lines, but it had not been trained to read, still less to copy, the written word from the parchment. To-day the situation is reversed. Men and women in millions can read and write ; but what proportion of them have been trained, or have trained themselves, to understand the grounds of the illiterate Athenian public's adjudication, or could undertake a similar task with similar capacities to-day ?

In the old illiterate world a high degree of education was sometimes found, among peasants and artisans as among princes, without any of the appurtenances of conventional instruction. In the literate world of to-day, by contrast, we have become used to the wide diffusion of instruction unaccompanied by the realities of education.

To what is this contrast due ? How is it that, in spite of the example of Athens, the little red schoolhouse and the railway bookstall, the poor man's University and the cheap novel can co-exist in the same society ? Why has the spread of education not given a more perceptible stimulus to literary and artistic creation ? Why, in an age in which, for the first time in history, governments are spending vast sums upon schools and teachers, in which far more Universities and institutions of higher learning have been founded than ever before, do those whose interests are centred on the things of the mind feel more and more that they are fighting a losing battle in loneliness against the whole spirit of the times ?

The answer is to be found, here as elsewhere, in the pervading influence of Croesus.

We have seen that the movement for popular education, part of the general democratic impulse, coincided with the material transformation that followed the great inventions. The two movements were in origin independent ; but, in their subsequent development, they were bound to meet. And, in the resulting interaction, if the industrial movement gained, through the enlargement of its range of action, the educational movement undoubtedly lost. Education, which had been thought of as an enrichment of the personality or an equipment for effective citizenship, came to be more and more regarded, both in the administrative office and the counting house, as

a training in the aptitudes needed for the skilled routine work of a machine-driven society.

The mere increase in the size and number of educational institutions has been sufficient by itself to make the adoption of more mechanical methods of educational administration almost inevitable. The member of a selection committee, faced with written applications from hundreds of teachers, cannot adopt the same sure and delicate methods of assessment as Socrates or Plato in their more intimate and restricted circle. Human values to-day are inevitably judged, if not by the same criteria as are applied to merchandise, at least by far cruder and more ready-made standards than of old. The widespread adoption and popularity of semi-mechanical methods for adjudicating on the intellectual and even the moral qualities of students is one of the most significant features of recent educational history. The administrator, faced with the impossibility of exercising his individual judgment on each case, adopts some rough method of approximation to ease his task. Others improve on his device until, by a characteristic irony, what was originally a mere temporary labour-saving expedient for an overworked official acquires a prestige and authority of its own. No one who has sat in the administrator's chair, with the lists of institutions and personnel, and their time-tables, before his eyes, will fail to realize why and how such mechanical influences have

found their way imperceptibly from the warehouse and the business office into the school and even the University. But, however intelligible and even excusable the development, the fact remains that the art of teaching has a hard struggle to maintain itself against deadening influences from which the circle of Socrates and Plato was immune.

Another influence tending in the same direction is the natural anxiety of the present-day student regarding his after-career. When learning was exclusive and aristocratic the student could surrender himself without further thought to its claims. The University of those days stood aloof from the economic life of the community. To-day it has inevitably to consider the material as well as the intellectual interests of its inmates. The interaction between the educational system and the outside world is not in itself to be deplored. On the contrary, it is greatly to be preferred, both on educational and on general social grounds, to the old system of isolation. But it entails obvious dangers of its own, of which the influence of Croesus and his standards is not the least.

A third factor, which can only be touched on briefly here, is an intrusion into the old Continent of influences from the New World, particularly from the United States. The psychological relationship between Europe and America is one of the most interesting, as it is one of the most

subtle and perplexing, elements in the life of the present generation. It represents the meeting, and too often the clash, of two utterly dissimilar worlds, of a society based on habit and tradition, with standards and institutions and beliefs inherited from a revered past, with a society which, in spite of its colonial origins, is pre-eminently the resultant of material conditions and which has created its own characteristic standards and institutions in the course of the unique period of the world's history that is already known as the Machine Age. Here are all the elements of misunderstanding and even of bitterness; and the contrast has not been softened by the considerable transference of economic power resulting from the war. It is impossible to push the analysis further in these pages. Suffice it to say that, just as America, with her culture and institutions still unadjusted to her spacious new home between the Atlantic and the Pacific, has suffered disorder in her growing intellectual life through the overpowering temptation to be uncritically imitative of the Old World, so Europe, in these days of economic embarrassment, is equally exposed to the temptation of excessive receptivity to American influence in the domain which the New World has made its own. If America has suffered through remaining too long an intellectual colony of Europe, so Europe is beginning to suffer equally through the undue acceptance of American standards in whole regions

of her life, administrative as well as purely economic, which affect very closely both her traditional institutions and her intellectual and artistic values. Reinforced from across the Atlantic, Croesus has made a renewed onslaught on the Old World, and, if he has not yet transformed it to his taste, he has at least succeeded in temporarily disordering its rhythm and striking fear and bewilderment into the guardians of its standards.

What then can be done? Whither shall we look for relief?

We seem to have reached an *impasse*.

We have seen that civilization rests upon the labours of Solon, that Croesus has entered in and is steadily undermining its foundations, and that he is, from his very nature, incapable of realizing the suicidal character of his activities. Must we then acquiesce in the inevitable decline of civilization? Must the world as a whole, now for the first time associated in a common destiny, pass through the cycle and suffer the decay that has overwhelmed more limited societies in other ages? Must the Machine Age run its course to the destined end, like Nineveh and Babylon, Tyre and Carthage and imperial Rome? To accept this conclusion would be to endorse a false conception of history and of the world's life, as is argued on a later page of this volume. Moreover, a battle is not lost till it is known to be lost; and in this case it is hardly even known,

by some of the principal contestants, to be engaged. In this situation, the immediate duty would seem to be twofold. There is, first, the task of spreading as widely as possible a realization of the issues at stake ; and there is, secondly, the task of considering how best to mobilize the resources available to meet the danger.

The moment that attention is turned to this latter problem we realize how premature it would be to despair of the issue. There are, in fact, immense reserves of strength on the side of Solon, but they have never set them in motion for the recognised common purpose. We have never yet in the modern world sought to unite the forces and influences that are everywhere active in maintaining and fortifying the best elements in its life. In a world where every other interest has organized itself in self-defence, the supreme interests of society have been left to be defended by lonely and unorganized volunteers. The very problems which have been touched on in the preceding pages, just because they are everybody's business, have been treated as though they were nobody's. Croesus, supreme in the arts of organization, has mobilized his millions : Solon, individualist by the very nature of his work and thought, has set nothing against him except tenacious individual wills. One by one, when the question is put to them, the scholars, the writers, the artists and the teachers admit the seriousness of the issue and the need for action to

meet it. In spite of the discomforts of the struggle, comparatively few have abandoned it. There is a very general willingness to recognize the responsibilities of those who value the things of the mind for the general welfare of society. Only, thus far there has been no corporate action and no regular means even for corporate discussion. Corporate self-consciousness indeed there is, whenever opportunity arises for testing it; but it is latent and unawakened for lack of initiative.

Where are we to look for such initiative?

It is not the object of these pages to lay down a practical programme. But it is pertinent to point out that civilization has furnished itself since the war, in the shape of the League of Nations, with a kind of institutional framework to facilitate discussion and action in the problems of the modern world. Originally conceived to fulfil more narrowly political functions, the League has shown its principal extension, and perhaps its greatest usefulness, in spheres hitherto remote from politics—if not from *πολιτική* in the old Greek sense. It has developed new and flexible methods to suit the special needs of professional fellow-workers in the different spheres of its activity; and amongst those whom it has thus called into council have been the scholars, writers, artists and teachers. The International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation (more honoured for its activities than for its title) and

its various sub-committees have for the first time formed a centre of discussion and a nucleus of organization, on an international basis, for the general problems of the world's intellectual life. And with the establishment of permanent homes or institutes in individual capitals to serve as radiating centres for these discussions and activities, modern society has perhaps hit on a form of institution that will become as indispensable a part of its corporate life as the University became in the Middle Ages. The history of the League of Nations is a striking illustration of the rapidity with which institutions develop when they are found to meet a social need. What has happened in regard to the world's economic life may well be repeated in the intellectual domain. The forms of corporate discussion and subsequent action will reveal themselves when the problems themselves are realized and the urgent need for dealing with them admitted.

If these plans should be developed, two considerations must be borne constantly in mind. First, that what is especially required, in addition to the technical organizations of fellow-specialists which exist already and must be further developed, is the association of the various specialisms for interests transcending each one of them but common to them all. Astronomers in the past have not lacked occasion to meet astronomers and historians to meet historians. What is lacking is an association in which the astro-

nomer, the historian and the philosopher will thresh out their problems together as equal representatives of Solon.

And in this discussion the teacher must have his share. Just as specialism needs to associate with specialism, so those who are engaged in the advancement of knowledge need to remain in the closest contact with those who are engaged in its diffusion. Science, Art, Letters and Education together form an indissoluble whole. United, they can stand four-square against the onslaught of Croesus. Divided, they will be individually overpowered.

And the teaching profession itself must manifest the same unity of purpose and self-respect. From the primary school to the University those whose mission it is to be the ministers of the succession, lighting the torch for each generation as it passes through the classroom, must feel that their cause is one with that of the scholars and discoverers whose work they interpret to younger minds.

In the play which, of all the Greek dramas that have come down to us, has perhaps excited the keenest speculation and the most poignant curiosity, Aeschylus represented the fabled originator of ancient science, the embodiment of Forethought and of man's control over the brute forces of his environment, chained to a rock, suffering the anguish of those whose fairest inventions had been turned to vilest use. But

in the helplessness of apparent defeat he guards a secret which the emissary of the powers in possession seeks in vain to extract from him. The drama—the first of a trilogy—ends with the defiance cast by Prometheus against the lord of material power.

“ Me let him lift and dash to gloom
Of nether hell, in whirls of gloom !
Yet—do he what extremes he may,
He cannot crush my life away ! ”

“ No piece of lost literature,” writes Professor Gilbert Murray, “ has been more ardently looked for than *Prometheus Freed*.” How Aeschylus set his Prometheus free we shall, in all probability, never know. But the liberation of the modern Prometheus—that is a drama for which the stage is now set. And the secret of his freeing is in the united will of the scholars, writers, artists and teachers of the entire world.

I

HISTORY AS AN ART

GREEK history has been a subject of study ever since Roman times ; but its students and teachers have not always stopped to ask themselves why they were studying it or what there was in it worthy of study. So it is worth while at the outset trying to answer these two simple questions.

Most of the wrong or inadequate reasons for studying history are now obviously unsatisfactory when applied to ancient Greece, though they may still pass muster in other departments of the study.

People used, for instance, to study history because they believed that 'history repeats itself,' and that the key to the future lay in knowledge of the past. It is this belief which has sent some of the clearest and shrewdest heads to the study of the ancients. 'He who wishes to know what is to be let him consider that which has been ; for everything in the world at every time has its own particular counterpart in times past.' This extraordinary sentiment emanates,

not from the defender of a dying study in search of an argument, but from the master mind of Macchiavelli. The same sentiment has been attributed, although not quite fairly, to Thucydides, who, if he was reincarnated at all, was reincarnated in Macchiavelli; and how widely it was held by the Romans may be seen by Cicero's choice of the title 'Philippics' for his speeches against Antony and by Plutarch's arrangement of his studies of Greek and Roman statesmen in 'Parallel Lives.' The Romans, of course, knew no other history but their own and that of Greece (for the Carthaginians had no historians, and even if they had produced any the Romans would not have read them); so that if history was to repeat itself it was the Greek cycle which would be re-performed. Hence Cicero, with the problems of an Empire to face, cheerfully soaked himself in the political philosophy of the city-state, and even Caesar needed the fresh air of Spain and Gaul to unlearn his early lessons. In their political institutions the Romans, like the English, refused to admit that they were doing anything new; and when the appeal to precedent failed they liked to appeal to history. And as the idea of progress or development was still unheard of, and remained so till the eighteenth century, it was natural for the founders of the Roman Empire, and the poets who reflected their views, to fall back on the idea of recurring cycles.

Yet it is hardly worth while wasting words in disposing of this theory. It is obvious that, though two historical situations may present striking similarities, though Charles I. and Louis XVI. both lost their heads, a whole set of conditions can never be similar or even approximately so. Moreover, even if they were, nobody could be sure of it, and even the most learned student of the past would shrink from acting with resolution on the strength of his hypothesis. For 'the subtlety of Nature is infinitely greater than the subtlety of man': the political situation is always more complicated than it appears; and a single detail not allowed for in the calculation may make all the difference. Hence the use of historical analogies, tempting though it is, and indispensable too as a help to the imagination, involves very great dangers. Many a Russian has lost his life for spending too much time over the history of the French Revolution: and Abdul Hamid probably lost his throne because he remembered too well how he had dealt with the Constitution of 1876. The right way with historical analogies is to use so many of them, and set the imagination so vividly to work, that you cannot possibly become the slave of any one. For if history proves nothing and predicts nothing, yet, rightly used, it will suggest a great deal.

Yet we moderns have one advantage over the students of the prophetic school—for, if we know

that history proves nothing, we know also that it disproves nothing. Macchiavelli could cast his eye over the troubled record of history (in which the generals and emperors have secured so much of the fine writing) and dogmatize on the futility of dreams of universal peace ; and idle cynics, who know less history than he, can interpret ' the poor ye have always with you,' as asserting the inevitability and permanence of the ' civilized poverty ' of our great cities. But the modern student of history does not dogmatize about anything ; he has learnt enough of the past to know that the present is totally unlike it and that, as Herodotus remarked, ' anything might happen in the immensity of time.' The distant future is hidden, and no historian or politician looks forward more than a few generations ; the nearer future is his study, and he studies it, not by investigating the past but by trying to understand the present.

This suggests another reason commonly given for the study of history—that it helps us to understand the present by familiarizing us with its antecedents. As applied to Greek history this is obviously absurd, for it would take a conscientious student more than one lifetime to trace the stream of causes through the two thousand years which divide the events of our own day from their antecedents in Greece. Well-known historians, who take refuge in this excuse, had much better be honest and admit

that they study history because they like it, and cannot help hoping that their readers will like it too. Applied to modern history the theory is more plausible, and made a formidable convert in the German Emperor, who suggested in 1890 that Prussian schoolboys should be taught history backwards so that effects might be traced back to their antecedent causes.

The suggestion was perfectly logical. The student who wants thoroughly to understand the present must dig down a little way to its roots in the past; and every well-arranged monograph or Blue-book on a contemporary problem opens with a historical chapter in which the immediate past of the question is surveyed from the standpoint of the present.

But to survey the past from the standpoint of the present is not history any more than to read a novel backwards is literature. History is an attempt to get away from the life of the present into the past—to see with the eyes and think with the mind of the men of the age we study. To interview them for their opinions on matters of present-day interest may sometimes be necessary, but they would not consider it the same as to study the history of their own day. Such a conception of history regards the Persian wars merely as a preparation for the conquests of Alexander, looks for nothing in the Middle Ages but symptoms of the Reformation, and searches

the index of Morley's *Gladstone* for the great man's opinions on Socialism.

Let us pass to another view, which is as old as our oldest books and as recent as last Sunday's sermon. We study history for the moral lessons it embodies. In it we find virtue rewarded and vice punished and thus recognize the moral purpose that rules the world. The writer of the book of Chronicles has made the course of history very simple to countless generations of readers. 'Sixteen years old was Uzziah when he began to reign; and he reigned fifty and two years in Jerusalem. . . . And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father Amaziah did. . . . And as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper.' And again two chapters further on: 'Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign; and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: but he did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord, like David his father. . . . Wherefore the Lord his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria; and they smote him and carried away a great multitude of them captives, and brought them to Damascus. And he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter.'

In spite of Jesus' plain teaching against special judgments in the matter of the Tower of Siloam, Rousseau was still expounding this moral

view of history to French parents in the eighteenth century, and every earthquake and volcano and even a General Election brings it to life again in our own. Yet there is nothing that can be said about it that has not been said far better long ago. Time after time men have learned to their cost, and their greatest teachers have told them, that *judgments do not happen*. The course of history does not express the moral law. If it did, prediction would be as easy as it was (after the event) to the priestly Jewish historian. An investigation into the morality of Bismarck and Cavour, for instance, would lay bare the future history of Germany and Italy. Close indeed is the connexion between the moral conduct of men and the history of nations ; but the wisest and most philosophical students of national movements have been those who, like Thucydides, and Thomas Hardy in the *Dynasts*, have curbed their own emotions and refrained most scrupulously from moral praise or censure. Only a critic who has lived through great history is fit to fling the stone, and he knows how hard it is to say, as Thucydides refused to say of the Athenians, whether they did ill of set purpose or because they ' could not help it,' fate driving them down the rapids. Readers who can face realities and do not mistake candour for callousness, will rather be initiated with Thucydides into the interplay between character and circumstance which is the soul of great history than

stand critically outside and point a censorious finger at every breach of the Ten Commandments.

But if this best of all possible reasons must be abandoned, what shall we substitute in its place ? One that is at once less pretentious and more agreeable has been handed down to us by the ' Father of History ' himself. Herodotus wrote his history, so he informs us in his opening words, in order that great and wonderful deeds should not be left without record or honour ; and it is clear that he intended his audience to listen to them in order that they might enjoy his ' great and wonderful ' story. All history is a story, an account of things done, a Drama (*δρᾶμα*) as the Greeks said, and we read it, as we read literature, in order to enjoy it. A historian is a literary artist ; and the greatest historian is he who tells his story best. Books that deal with the past but are not artistically written are not, strictly speaking, historical at all ; they may provide material for someone else's *Historiê*, but that is something different.

This sounds very simple ; but it still remains to explain what distinguishes the writing of history from other branches of literary art. Many ' historical novels ' tell ' great and wonderful stories,' but their authors are never historians. What distinguishes the historian from the poet and the novelist is that the material with which he deals is confined strictly to what are known

as 'facts'—to deeds that have really been done, thoughts and feelings that have really been experienced by living men in times past. The poet and the novelist draw inspiration from these too; but while they may allow themselves to forget and transmute, to 'shatter and remould' them 'nearer to the Heart's Desire,' the historian, most ascetic among artists, must keep his imagination strictly under control (ask Froude and Macaulay how hard that is to do) and concentrate all its strength on the interpretation of the stuff that lies before him. For the peculiar effectiveness of history—the peculiar emotion which the historical artist aims at conveying—depends on its being true in this limited sense of the word. The moment we suspect that our artist is painting up his battle, like a sub-editor, 'out of his head,' his book becomes for us merely a novel and almost necessarily a bad novel. History is one thing and myth is another. Both may be true in their own special way (and we shall see later on how much truth there is in the Greek myths): but mix the two kinds of truth and the result is confusion and a feeling of imposture.

But it is not easy for an artist to learn to handle marble and clay; nor is it easy for a historian to learn to handle the facts of the past. Both require a laborious scientific training before they acquire the technical skill on which their success as artists depends. Both work with a

whole armoury of instruments and apparatus which it needs much practice to master. So historical art, like most other arts, depends on the scientific use of material. In this sense the historian is a scientific student, and as the material he handles is continually accumulating his scientific training is daily becoming more laborious. But all his toil will be but dust and ashes if he does not know how to make his material minister to his design as an artist or if he is content to regard history, not as an art, but only as 'a science, nothing less and nothing more.'

For no writer, or syndicate of writers, can claim to be historians, however imposing their list of 'authorities consulted,' unless they convey the peculiar pleasure which we associate with great history. What is this distinctively historical emotion for the sake of which we read, or ought to read, history? It seems wrong to try to analyse it for fear of doing it violence. Yet the attempt must be made.

Readers of history might perhaps say that they were conscious of a twofold influence which they set down to its atmosphere. One is a sense of intimacy with an immense and unbroken past. History does for us in time what geography does in space. When the little world before their eyes is all men care for and the hills that enclose their homesteads bound their knowledge also, men are rightly called savages. The

blue line on the horizon marks the limit of their morality ; and if a stranger comes from beyond the range they will not think it wrong to enslave him if he is docile or eat him if he is succulent. Men who know no history are akin to savages too. Let the reader imagine for a moment that he knows nothing of the past beyond what he has actually seen and experienced. Let him think away from his mind all the ramifications of that knowledge either oral or written or perpetuated in buildings and institutions ; and then let him examine the remains of his mental furniture. He will have excised—what is (or must we say used to be ?) to an Englishman almost a sixth sense—the sense of the past. He will miss what may have been his peculiar pride in family or school or University. He will be denationalized and delocalized ; for he will be cut off from all the dignified and enduring associations of nation and township, and their meaning will be exhausted for him by the policeman and the rate-collector and the chatter of the newspapers. He and his little circle will be merely a small blind striving social unit cast adrift in a world of which they have and desire to have no understanding. They only know that it is big and complicated and very cruel. Few men since civilization began have been so completely divorced from history as this ; for history is all round us and we grow up under its spell. Yet the ruthless Radicalism of modern life since the

Industrial Revolution is doing much to withdraw men from its influences ; and among the derelects of our large cities in Europe and America one may meet families whose horizon is as limited and vision as clouded as those of primitive savages, or as that of the Jews would have been if, when they set out on their wanderings and knew they were to become a nation without a country, they had not taken their history with them as their most cherished possession. If the modern world values this sense, which history alone can supply, it will need to foster it more consciously and deliberately as the unseen influences that nourish it become weakened year by year by the conditions of the age.

There is a second service which most educated men will feel they owe to history. It trains and refines and chastens the judgment and teaches difficult lessons of tolerance and courage. A man who has read history is like a man who has seen and travelled much and gained manifold experience of the ways of men and nations. His sympathies are wider, his criticisms less sweeping, his expectations less sanguine and impatient than those of the novice for whom everything is totally new and unexpected. He will not be ready with quick remedies for present difficulties : for history supplies no rules for the solution of her problems. But she has in store for her devotees a more precious gift—eyes to see and understand and unshaken courage to face

and master them. It is easy to observe from the speeches of statesmen in emergencies whether the spirit of history has ever lighted upon them. For such there are no panics and no heroics, no visions of ruin or prophecies of Utopia, but only a steady sense of the duty and the dignity of bearing for one brave and difficult instant the Atlantean load of the world's affairs.

This twofold spirit is what the historical artist seeks to convey. The claim is more modest than what is sometimes put forward, but it is surely great enough. Let those who ask for quicker results pass on to newer subjects.

A second question remains to be answered. *What* is it in the past which the historian records? What is worthy of his attention and what is not?

Some moderns dismiss this question with a summary answer. Everything in the past is worthy of being recorded. It is the whole past we wish to preserve—every scrap and vestige of it which survives. For us no piece of knowledge, no fact about the past of mankind is common or unclean. All are worthy materials for the complete and final and utterly truthful record of human development which it is the object of the science of history to build up.

Yet a moment's reflection will show that such an ideal is unattainable. The thoughts and actions of a single man in a single hour are legion; yet they are all facts about the past and, if

recorded, would form historical material. Very little of the past ever suffers survival, and that little must be sifted and supplemented by the critical imagination of historians. In other words, the historian not only collects but selects ; and no two historians (for historians are but men and not recording angels) will select alike. So their history, when it is written, will not be the last word of science, but a work of subjective imagination : as truthful as they can make it, but still *their* book and not *the* book on the subject. Thus the study of the past can never be exhausted ; Greece and Rome yield new treasures for every inquirer ; and their history needs to be rewritten for every fresh generation of readers.

Yet, though all historians do their own selecting, there will be some rough agreement on what is worth selection. What kind of facts is it which particularly attract their choice ?

History, we have been taught by the author of *Hero-worship*, centres round the biography of Great Men ; and the historian who studies heroes will understand the development of peoples. It is tempting, because it is easy, to simplify history by reducing it to biography : and for a first introduction to a period or a problem it is a useful method. But it is not truly satisfactory.

For history and biography are not necessarily

but only accidentally connected. Biography studies men because their character is worthy of study. But the historian must reluctantly admit that greatness of character is no test at all of a man's prominence in history. Many weak and dull and base princes and politicians loom large on her stage, pushed to the front by some accident of birth or opportunity, while village Hampdens and hedge philosophers remain unknown and unhonoured. And where a truly great character is also (as in the case of Carlyle's Heroes) historically important, he overtops his fellows not merely because he is taller, but because he is raised upon their shoulders. Had he been born, as we say, 'too early' or 'too late' they would never have discovered him.

This suggests where the historian should really be looking—not at the great men so much as at the little men, not at heroes, but at the people. For without the co-operation of the people, without the unnumbered efforts of the minds and hands of the rank and file, kings and heroes are powerless. And the only way to study so bewildering a multitude is to concentrate attention, not on the daily actions of its separate lives, but on what it is thinking and feeling—on what are variously known as the ideas or tendencies or forces which inspire and impel it. However keen his interest in the pageant of outward events, the wise historian always harks back (as Thucydides in his speeches) to the inner world

of ideas ; for without them the moving forces of history remain unintelligible. These ideas made history, not because great men held them, but because little men held them. Indeed the big movements of history are nearly always anonymous ; and sometimes history has not even succeeded in attaching to them a label. The Reformation is attributed to Luther, but who caused the Industrial Revolution ? And who sowed the seeds of a new era in Russia ? ‘ Anonymous Russia ’ answered Turgenieff, in the sombre closing words of his *Virgin Soil*.

But not all ideas and tendencies are equally worthy of study. Here again the historian must select. Why is the history of ancient Greece so much more zealously studied than the chequered record of her fate in the later Middle Ages ? The answer is simple. Because the ancient Greeks were better people than their mediaeval survivors. It is with nations as with individuals—one does not wish to know them unless they are interesting : if they are dull and petty it is not worth the trouble. The history of a people is worth study if the ideas and forces which moved it are great and noble, if they still have power to enrich or benefit human life.

Here we come back, by a circuitous route, to the preachers and moralists. The object of historians, and the object of all artists, is—if they cared to think it out—to improve the

conditions of human life. But it is not their immediate object. Their immediate object is to see faithfully and render truthfully whatsoever, in the present or the past, calls out the exercise of their best powers.

II

THE STUDY OF GREEK HISTORY

A SERIOUS student of any period of the past, however limited his knowledge, approaches his study in the spirit of the historical artist. His aim is to ' get a grasp ' of his subject—to attain to a real understanding of the life of the people he is studying. So he will not confine himself to the narrative of their wars and policy but will range widely and freely over their literature and art, what they have said and done and made and used, until gradually, like a traveller who has stayed long in a strange country, he begins to feel at home there and to speak with confident knowledge of its inmates and their ways. For it is really possible, as great historians have shown us, and as every lover swears, for the mind and imagination of man to live in one place and his body in another.

For a student who really means to set out on such a journey the study of ancient Greece, apart from the extraordinary interest of the ideas which it embodies (of which it is not yet time

to speak), offers some peculiar advantages in methods of travel and sight-seeing.

In the first place the Greek historians are greater than any who have written since. The student of Greek history is set down to master Thucydides and Herodotus (not necessarily in the original), while for a modern period he would be served out the latest text-book. So that he has at once a happier and a more humane introduction to his subject; for Thucydides and Herodotus were no mere narrators of outward facts, but men deeply interested, in their different ways, in many sides of the life of their times.

Moreover for Greece, while we have these first-rate histories, we possess comparatively little bad history; so that the good tradition, kept alive, by some divine chance, at Oxford, which maintains the outer history of a people in close touch with its inner life—its thought and literature and religion and institutions, runs less risk of being overridden. Nowhere else is it so easy and so instructive to study together the outer and inner sides of national movements: to watch, for instance, in literature and philosophy the theory and in narrative history (as in the Comedy) the practice of the world's first attempt at Democracy.

For this reason Greek history offers, for those who can master it, the best introduction (excepting only perhaps the Bible) to the study of sociology.

For Sociology, latest-born of the Muses, is not merely a study of high-sounding abstractions. She does not bear rule, where some of her admirers seem to seek her, in a bare and uninviting field of her own, amid bloodless formulae and 'principles' which deal with everything in general, from the Nebular Hypothesis to the ultimate triumph of Socialism, but explain nothing in particular. Her business, like that of the historian, is with life as it is, not with life as it should be, or as it would have been but for the accidents of which all history is the record. Only her sweep is wider and her interests more comprehensive than those of the narrative historian who, with his story to tell, dare not stray into side-issues. So she sits aloft as on a mountain-top surveying and comparing and trying to understand and appreciate the endless and intricate interplay of all the various social forces, great and small, conspicuous or obscure, which make up the life of a community. In a modern society this is well-nigh impossible to do. The forces are too numerous, and their mutual action too complicated and too difficult to watch. Who could explain, for instance, in brief general statement exactly wherein consists the stability of the English monarchy, or how and why it was affected, favourably or unfavourably, by a Royal victory in the Derby? Hundreds of factors enter in; and it would take even Thucydides, settling in England as a stranger, half a lifetime

to understand the inner meaning of the scenes at the funeral of King Edward.

But in Greece the sociologist has a far easier task. He is in a younger and less complex world, where life has not yet been specialized into compartments and all the various social forces, still new to their work, can be watched in relation to the whole, of which (as we are constantly forgetting) they are but the humble members. Greek life, like our own, found room, in its institutions, for law and religion, and charity and economics, and sport and education and medicine; and Greek ideas found expression, like our own, in art and literature and science and theology and metaphysics. In almost all these departments they are in fact our guides and masters—but with this great difference, that to them they were not departments. It would be truer (though this would do injustice to individual artists and thinkers) to call them moods or facets. They were the temporary playthings or preoccupations of a many-sided civilization which desired, before all things, to ‘see life whole’: or sources of awe and reverence or joy and wonder to men for whom their City proclaimed in the truths it taught in its laws, and the beauty it manifested in its buildings, that

‘Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty: this is all

Man knows on earth and all he needs to know.’

What a paradox this sounds to us in our specialized world, where philosophers and artists,

bishops and bohemians, the professors of Truth and of Beauty, so seldom rub shoulders. Yet for the sociologist who gazes down from his viewpoint on to this strangely beautiful Greek countryside, so perfect and satisfying and yet so sober and well ordered and unromantic, seeking in vain for some sign of the familiar landmarks of modern life, for curates and headmasters, solicitors and professors, Royal Academicians and business men, only one thing is needful—he must learn to use his eyes. They are all there in embryo—even the academicians. But they call themselves by other names—by preference citizens or human beings.

Yet they must needs have special names for the occupations of their special moods : and here the sociologist will find, if he has the appetite, a feast of enlightenment. For the real way to learn about the part which these various social forces played in the life of Greek men and states is not to study them under the microscope of the specialist, drawing them out one by one from the little pigeon-holes which Aristotle carved out for most of them, but to see them as the older Greeks saw them and to think out the meanings of the words which, with their exquisite precision and never-failing felicity, they attached to them. ‘Drama,’ ‘History,’ and ‘Economics’ are obvious cases. But there are a host of others which can neither be translated nor transliterated : for they are of too delicate texture.

Who shall interpret in a phrase or a paragraph the full meaning of Phusis ('growth,' 'process,' 'nature,' 'Nature'), or Nomos ('law,' 'custom,' 'rule,' 'pasture'—what men or animals grow up in), or Polis (which later on we shall spend a weary section in trying to elucidate), or Techne (art, craft, skill, dodge), or Philosophia (which is far nearer 'inquisitiveness' than 'philosophy'—while a 'philosopher' to an early Greek almost meant a 'handy man'), or Logos (both 'language' or 'word' and its inner counterpart 'reason': for if you only know one tongue and that so exact and expressive as Greek, one word will do for both), or Ergon (which is what a Logos should end in, whether an 'act' of Parliament or of war, or a 'work' of art or of daily bread-winning), or, last but far from least, Eudaimonia, that 'happiness' which the philosophers strove to analyze but the common man attained, that 'harmony of thought and passion which may some day once more take the place, in the deepest regions of our moral consciousness, of our present dreary confusion and barren conflicts.'

'Most professions,' it has been said, 'damage a man.' It was because the Greeks were not professional men, because they did not live in compartments, that their lives were happy and harmonious and their society is still so interesting to study; and it was because they were naturally and childishly happy that they found

satisfaction in grand and simple 'words and works,' in Doric architecture and Homer and Sophocles (who writes, still less reads, tragedies and epics nowadays?), and could utter their thoughts with precision and felicity, but without a touch of affectation, in a language so simple and austere that our most careful translators dare not leave it unadorned for fear of its 'baldness.' Once or twice again, in the literature of other nations, in the Beatitudes or the Little Flowers of St. Francis, we come upon the same utterly truthful simplicity; and here too there is happiness behind it. But never, except perhaps for a brief moment in Japan, has a whole society been so harmonious or so happy. Some day we may learn (there is no harder or more necessary lesson before our civilization) to control and enjoy (since, like the young man in the Gospel, we shall never consent to scrap or sell) the many possessions that encumber us, to harmonize in a civilization of our own all the social forces of modern life. When that day comes we shall understand the Funeral Speech of Pericles. 'For Ministers and Members of Parliament will then find their most effective form of expression in that grave simplicity of speech, which in the best Japanese State papers rings so strangely to our ears, and citizens may look to their representatives, as the Japanese army looked to their generals, for that unbought effort of the mind by which alone man

becomes at once the servant and the master of nature.'

Yet if the Greeks were masters they were also children of Nature. Here again they will be a help and a delight to the sociologist, for they had the children's gift, in their social arrangements as in their writings, of going plainly and directly to the root of the matter. Only, unlike many professors, he must have retained his human sympathies and understand child language. He will do so if he remembers that, like all great teachers, when the Greeks have most to say about social problems they are least dogmatic, and if he is prepared to find as much hidden truth about human nature in the debates of Thucydides and the parables of Herodotus as in the short stories (to call them by their modern name) of the Gospels.

For it is the great merit of children that they are unable to preach truth (even in the pleasant domain of sociology): they can only embody it. From this it follows, 'as the night the day,' that, wrap up their ideas in any fancy dress they can steal, from the epic to the fairy-tale, they cannot possibly 'be false to any man.' They will always say what they mean: and, in so doing, tell the careful modern listener a great deal more than they meant.

The reader is getting puzzled: so it may be well to give a few examples of the quality of mind which we are describing, and which con-

tributes so much to the delight and the profit of Greek study. As sociology is concerned both with the abstract and the concrete, both with men's minds and their houses, we will take cases from each, beginning, of course, as children always do, with the concrete.

To the modern architect-engineer, who can bridge the Hudson and dam the Nile and help the tourist to girdle the globe in a little more than a month, the old grey ringwalls on the Greek hillsides look at first sight rather pathetic—childishly imposing with towers and gateways and bolts and bars and battlements, all complete and all useless. Yet even he will admit, as he fingers the square-cut blocks, that they played the game very thoroughly and built (as he has never been allowed to do by any syndicate that employed him) according to their lights. Nobody now asks architects for ringwalls or Propylaea or oblong two-roomed temples. Yet twentieth-century architects who build public buildings in reinforced concrete with scores of committee rooms and other entirely modern needs still train their eye on Greek models. There they still stand on Greek soil, not ruins, for ruins are romantic, but as complete and perfect in the mind's eye as yesterday's sand castle before the tide came up, trying to say what they meant and saying a great deal more than they meant; and when our architect designs his next porch-moulding or drawing-

room frieze or some other of the few details in which ancient and modern needs coincide, he will find himself, almost without knowing it, exactly reproducing some Greek device, not because it is Greek and he has learnt it, but simply because, once and for all, like the curves in the Parthenon, it is *right*. Yet the Greeks left us no books on the 'principles of architecture' and we have no reason to think they wrote any.

This very concrete illustration must stand for others in many fields—for the precision and truthfulness and blessed honesty and unaffectedness of what the Greeks thought and said and did in religion and philosophy, in art and literature, in law and economics and even in medicine. For in all these spheres where we bewildered denizens of a complex and preoccupied society must needs let 'custom lie heavy on us,' the Greeks kept the waters freshly flowing and always pleasantly astir with the play of the intellect. Our practitioners and schoolmasters, for instance (even those Hellenic souls who teach 'compulsory Xenophon'), are apt to fall into a routine, and to prescribe, rather than to embody, the Greek spirit. It would do them good to spend a few months in the society of their Hellenic predecessors. They would be aghast at their ignorance, but perhaps impressed with their native honesty. A Greek doctor knew little about nerves : yet, if you spent your day as

he recommended, Greek life, with its 'noble use of leisure,' was one perpetual rest-cure, without the fuss and humbug of the sanatorium. And since he regarded the schoolmaster, not as client to be hooked or an old fool to be humoured, but (without sociologists to tell him so) as a natural colleague and ally, he played into his hands and helped two great social forces (which in our modern state are only just beginning to acknowledge one another's existence), namely men's minds and bodies, to co-operate together as Nature intended. For as 'man is naturally inquisitive' (as even Aristotle, least childlike of Greeks, remembered from his boyhood), and will learn even cricket averages by heart if he is given nothing tastier to feed on, leisure might as well be used for sound learning. So the Greeks, ever direct and practical, invented 'schools' for their scholê or leisure-time, and we modern hypocrites have kept the name and inverted its meaning until, after 2000 years in the wilderness, the wheel has come round full circle and we have rediscovered 'leisure schools.' Schoolboys of course (more Hellenic than their masters) have known about them all the time, but they have wisely kept it dark.

Let us pass for a moment to deeper themes on which we find it so hard to recognize, still less to speak, 'the utter truth the careless angels know.' For the sociologist has lessons to learn here too.

The Greeks had many moods : but whether they were good or naughty, absorbed like artists or (as the Corinthians said of the Athenians) perpetually on the fidget, like an overdriven business man, their eyes and mouths were always open to enjoy all that came their way, and nurse and propriety never restrained them from blurt-ing out what they saw or thought. So they were not afraid, as we seem to be the more intellectual we become, of ' taking themselves seriously ' or ' committing themselves ' in speech or writing, or of being their sensible straight-forward clear-headed open-air selves where it is ' good form ' for modern man to be morbid or sensitive or embarrassed or (as if the two could really go together) cynically playful. Like all grown-up children, like Chaucer and Shakspeare, Plato and Sophocles, St. Francis and (so I at least read the records) his Jewish prototype, they were at once very grave and very light-hearted : because they were gifted with a common sense (how misleading is the adjective) or, as they called it, a ' saving sense,' which to our romantic and disordered imaginations generally appears (especially in school or in church) rather mad and meaningless, but when we find out what it signifies seems positively uncanny.

Perhaps the best example of this Hellenic quality is the Sermon on the Mount. It is generally accepted as an axiom that it does not mean what it says. Yet you may awake with

a start to the realities of human nature and discover that (like the first man who called a school a school) the speaker meant exactly what he said and so said a great deal more than he meant. He was wise enough, for instance, to have discovered and honest enough to declare (it needed, in this case, less wisdom than candour) that when men have eaten or drunk more than is good for them or done other things which they ought not to have done, not only are their mouths dry but their whole vision is clouded and they cannot 'see God.' So he summed up this and a string of companion truths in that Hellenic series of aphorisms which we call the Beatitudes. For surely that exquisite clearness and honesty of insight and expression is characteristically Hellenic. It is what we find and 'greet with a cheer' in the parable of Midas or of the tomb of Nitocris (who preached her sermon after her death), or in the tale of Solon and Croesus, which concentrates into a page or two the whole moral conflict of the Industrial Revolution. For sermons can be preached and truths can be told about nations as well as about men; and the sociologist must learn (as he can learn best of all from the Greeks and best among Greeks from their two great historians) that, with the 'political animal' as with the human, it is the artists who see deepest. But here again he must grow eyes: and when he reads, for instance, the old story of the ring of Polycrates or that tragic

dialogue between the Athenians and the Melians, must see in them, not merely, with the chroniclers, the pretexts for the break-up of an old alliance and for the annexation of a small island, but some very interesting revelations, which the wise historians keep up their sleeve for those who have eyes to detect them, about Greek human nature in general.

But it is time to go back to what, in our elder brother language, we call more mundane matters. For we are primarily concerned in this chapter, not with what we find when we get to Greece, but with why it is beneficial to make the journey. It is difficult to avoid foreshadowing results when one speaks of methods. Yet these must be reserved, so far as possible, for the end of the inquiry.

We have seen that Greek study is to be recommended because the evidence available for the student is better in quality than he can hope, with one possible exception, to find elsewhere. A second advantage is that there is not much of it. Greek books tell us comparatively little about Greek society and the conditions of Greek life. This is a great boon to a student: for it spares the poor jade memory many a weary load and allows scope for a man's imagination to find its own way about its new world.

Why do Greek books tell us so little?

Partly because so few of them are extant. 'To read and re-read the scanty remains' of

Greek literature is, it has been said, 'a pleasant and not a laborious task.' No doubt of late years the non-literary evidence has been accumulating; but the student of Greek history can still survey with complacency his mediaeval and modern colleagues toiling amid the manuscripts of the Record Office or the newspapers of the British Museum.

Partly because, in the writings we have, the Greeks often assume knowledge in their readers which we do not possess. One of our chief sources of information, for instance, is the Comedy; but there are many jokes in Aristophanes which are still entirely dark to us, and others whose exact meaning remains uncertain because we are ignorant of some little social fact. Moreover, though the best Greeks wrote for all civilized posterity, they always imagined that posterity living under their own city-state conditions: so that, though they stop to explain peculiarities, they nowhere explain the essentials on which city-state society depends.

Partly because there was a great deal of which they were ignorant themselves. We live in an age of statistics and exact information, when every student, by consulting a hand-book, can feel the pulse of a modern community. Ingenious inquirers have probed every nook and corner of our social fabric and laid bare the mysterious laws by which the marriage rate, the consumption of beer and the magnitude of our

foreign trade (to select three factors only) ebb and flow together in rhythmic circles. But Greek statesmen had no Blue-books and no figures to guide them ; and they could only tell by empty seats in the theatre or the assembly whether the population under their charge was rising or falling. And as they themselves did not know them it is not easy for us either to ascertain facts of this kind. Indeed until 1817, when Boekh wrote his monumental book on the social economy of Athens, hardly anyone seems to have tried to do so.

During the last half-century archaeologists have made a brave attempt to fill this gap in our knowledge ; but perhaps it is a good thing that they have not done so. They have certainly succeeded in unearthing with the spade mountains of ' real solid fact,' and thereby in causing a great revolution in the study of antiquity. This change is all to the good ; but the real significance of archaeology consists, not in the gaps which it has filled, but in the vistas which it has opened out. One need not have clambered about the stone-heaps of ancient sites to feel that the spade has laid bare more problems than it has solved ; it was never likely that a science, however exact in its methods, which relies largely upon chance for its finds, should supply the historian with the mass of neat and sifted data which the student of modern society demands for his generalizations. It will some-

times seem to confirm him and sometimes seem to contradict him, but will never save him the trouble of using his imagination.

But there is a third reason, perhaps the most cogent of all, why Greek history is worth study. It is because it offers the student an account of a society which, though really civilized, and therefore intelligible to ourselves, is yet wholly different from our own. People often speak as if Greek and modern society were akin, or as if, by trying, we could somehow knit closer their relationship. No mistake could be more fatal ; for it obscures the understanding of the chief forces both in Greek society and in our own. Greek civilization differs fundamentally from our own, both in its material environment and in its thoughts and feelings ; and the only way to its understanding is, as Canadians always inform their newly arrived immigrants, to ' forget all you ever knew,' to drive out of the mind all its old ideas of social life. The converse of this, as our Hellenists and overseas visitors need equally to be reminded, is likewise true.

The same advice would be given to students of the Aztecs and the Egyptians. But there is this great difference—while the Greeks were wholly unlike us, they were yet as *civilized* as ourselves : and civilized man has the same soul all the world over. So that, while Greek society presents a strange aspect and Greek history runs a course which, with modern spectacles on, we

find it impossible to understand, Greek literature speaks to us of the great common themes of humanity in language to which, despite all the conventions of ancient writing, we can learn to give an immediate response. Greek society is very far from us : but Greek literature is very near us ; and one of the main interests of Greek study, an interest which no other history offers in the same degree, is to watch, in an environment sharply and strangely different from our own, the common problems and strivings of humanity break through.

Finally, Greek history offers the student, if his horizon is wide enough, a picture of the entire development, from birth to decay, of a complete state of civilization. Such a phenomenon can be observed nowhere else on the same scale. Other great societies have risen, prospered and declined : but they have either left us no adequate record or, when we meet them first, they are already full-grown. But Greek civilization we can trace in almost every stage of its progress : both in that first dazzling and crowded journey which, packing the development of ages into two generations, culminated in the brief and perfect glory of the Periclean age ; and in that longer and less eventful march through the centuries, when, no longer Greek but Graeco-Roman, it penetrated, with the legions, into every corner of the Western World. ' From the sack of Cnosos to the sack of Constantinople,'

or better, perhaps, from Hesiod to Odoacer, we can watch the Greeks, as shepherds and farmers in what historians call their Middle Age, as citizens and statesmen in the full grown city-state, as pioneers and colonists for the Macedonian Kingdom, as the teachers and civilizers and at last the victims of Rome.

It is worth while dwelling on this point for a moment longer : for it is in sharp contradiction with some current notions.

It contradicts the notion that there has been continuous ' progress ' from antiquity to our own day. This view springs of course from Darwin, and attempts, by a confusion of thought, to transfer to the tiny sphere of recorded human action a hypothesis that was intended for the vast spaces of time since life first appeared on our planet. It is supported by reference to isolated features such as slavery, which is supposed to have given way to serfdom in the Middle Ages, while serfdom, by a similar ' progress,' was later evolved into the wage-labour of modern life. It is grotesquely false. There has been no continuous progress. The civilization which the Greeks created and the Romans borrowed languished and died in the fourth century after Christ of a mysterious malady which no one has yet finally diagnosed ; and no law of progress will prevent ours from dying likewise if we fail in vigour, like the ancients, against the forces that beset us. The world

went back in the Dark Ages in almost every department of human activity, and then built civilization anew upon fresh foundations.

Again, it contradicts the view which speaks loosely of the beginning of the Christian era as the chief turning-point in all historical development. The social and political effects of Christianity, momentous as they were, took some centuries to assert themselves : and when they did so they helped to dissolve rather than to transform the old order. Christianity came to birth at the height of Graeco-Roman civilization ; and it is one of the few social factors of any importance which have survived its wreck ; so that in this sense Mr. Chesterton is justified in describing it as ' the most Pagan thing we have.'

And, lastly, it contradicts the notion that Greek civilization lay outside any course of historical and social development whatsoever. No one would venture, of course, to make such a statement in set terms ; but much is spoken and written about ' the Greeks ' as if they had all lived at one time on nothing a year and had all possessed the wisdom and the taste of the best fifth-century Athenians. This view is a legacy from many generations of literary study. It was not unnatural at the Renaissance when men rediscovered antiquity and with it, for a brief moment, the art of living. They were too happy just then to be historians : too well pleased with their treasure-trove to bother their

heads about dates and development. For them the Parthenon and the Laocoon were equally classical; and when they painted pictures out of Ovid and copied their morals (as they thought) from Aspasia they were conscious of no anachronism. Nor was Shakspeare when he made Cleopatra play billiards. But, in these latter days, we have grown strangely conscientious; and it is time that Greek study fell into line in its methods (it need not fear the ordeal of that parade ground) with that of other times and peoples.

III

THUCYDIDES THE IMPERIALIST

WHEN Thucydides returned to Athens from exile in 403 he was a broken-hearted man. He was broken-hearted because he knew that the political ideal which was bound up with all that he held dear in the world—his religion, his patriotism, his personal hopes and friendships—had passed away from Greece for ever.

What was this ideal? And what reflection of his disappointment can we find in his book? If we can reimagine for ourselves the Thucydides of 434, before the outbreak of the war, in all the ardour of his youthful enthusiasm, we shall have a better insight into much that was written by the old and embittered Thucydides of 403. In what follows I will use nothing but the materials he has given us in his own book.

We need not ask who the man was round whom the ideals of the young Thucydides centred. His ideal Athenian statesman was Pericles: and the political creed of Pericles was the political creed of the young Thucydides. In the Funeral Speech, which Thucydides deliberately inserted

to point the contrast between Athens before and Athens after the plague and the war fever, we are given the political creed of Pericles. It is glorified by the golden haze of memory, and obscured, too, by necessary allusions to a particular political situation: but to a careful reader the main lines of it stand out clear and distinct. Let us isolate them for a few moments from the dazzling eloquence of their context. The Periclean political ideal, though Pericles did not know it, was really two-fold: it has its national side and its imperial side. Let us take the two singly. In the first place, Pericles speaks in the Funeral Speech as a patriot. His words are perhaps the highest expression of patriotism to be found anywhere in literature; Japan itself could hardly equal them. It is a patriotism in which all else in life is merged—art, religion, intellect, character, commerce, domesticity, empire. Pericles has encouraged art: for art is the fitting ornament of his Athens. He has glorified religion: for the worship of Athena is the worship of Athens. He has given rein to the intellect: it is the highest instrument for the service of Athens. He has awakened and strengthened the national character: it has been a symbol to all men of the greatness of Athens. He has developed commerce: it has brought all the wealth of the earth to Athens. He has supported the family: it has brought up sons and daughters to live and die for Athens. He has widened the bounds of

empire : it has carried far into the land of the barbarian the ideals and the glory of Athens. Thucydides has taken care to emphasize this again and again : not only in the Funeral Speech, but in the speeches about Athens in the first book. Athenians are men who regard their intellect as most truly their own when they employ it in the service of their country (τῇ δὲ γνῶμῃ οἰκειοτάτῃ ἐς τὸ πράσσειν τι ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς), they are of all men the most adventurous, the most excitable and the most restless : but these active, nervous, impatient Americans of the ancient world (as the Corinthians might have called them) spent their energies, not on getting rich, or in piling up a reputation, but in the performance of patriotic service. Their idea of enjoyment is to do their duty to Athens (μήτε ἑορτὴν ἄλλο τι ἡγεῖσθαι ἢ τὰ δέοντα πράξαι).

Why does Thucydides emphasize this so often and so strongly ? It is because, in his usual manner, he wishes to point a contrast. He wishes to show us how Pericles and the Athenians of his generation, were not only patriots, but could not conceive of any Athenians not being patriots. Athens was so great, so perfect and so beautiful that all Athenians by the very law of their nature could not fail to fall in love with her, to become her ἐράσται : no need to fear lest the pride of intellect, or the mystical teachings of religion, or the worship of money, or the lusts of personal ambition should corrupt the Athenian's

patriotism: no need to place any check upon the movements of the human spirit. The Athenian is to grow up according to the law of his Athenian being, like a colt at pasture, free from all spur or bridle (*ἀνειμένως διαιτώμενος*). He is born an Athenian, and an Athenian he will remain.

It was a unique moment in the history of Greece and of the world—a moment when it was still possible for the wisest of men to believe that all the highest forces in man's being were working towards one harmonious and visible end—the glorification of a middle-sized city on a small peninsula in the smallest of the continents. When he wrote his history Thucydides knew that it had been only a moment—that he himself had been carried forward, with all his hopes and ideals, on the crest of a wave, which had broken and dispersed for ever. The whole of the last part of his book is concerned with showing us how the Periclean conception of patriotism, so far from being the normal state of the normal Athenian, was replaced, even before Pericles' death, by a whole host of new and contradictory ideas. A few months of an epidemic were enough to alter the whole faith of a nation: *ἐτράποντο ἐς ὀλιγωρίαν καὶ ἱερῶν καὶ ὁσίων ὁμοίως*. And within fifteen years the most brilliant of Athenian statesmen, the man whom Pericles had trained to continue his own tradition, can define Patriotism as a sentiment of gratitude

which is obligatory only so long as a man is well treated. *τό τε φιλόπολι οὐκ ἐν ᾧ ἀδικοῦμαι ἔχω, ἀλλ' ἐν ᾧ ἀσφαλῶς ἐπολιτεύθην.* This was the end of the Periclean patriotism.

Let us pass on to the second point. What sort of conception did Pericles, and the young Thucydides, have of the Athenian Empire—of Athens, that is, not as the greatest among the Hellenic city-states, but as the mistress of a large and heterogeneous collection of vassals? We are familiar nowadays with the contradiction between Imperialism and Nationalism, between the conception of Little England or Little France and the conception of the British Empire or the French Empire. Was there any such contradiction in the mind of Pericles between Athens the city-state and Athens the Mistress of the Seas?

The most extraordinary thing about the Funeral Speech is that there is no such contradiction: you would not know from reading it that Athens had a tribute-paying empire at all. You would know that she was a great and powerful state, that she controlled the sea by her commerce and her navy, that her citizens had found their way, and left their memorial, in the distant parts of the world. But you will find nothing about the nature of that memorial, about the manner in which the free Greeks of Athens ruled over the free Greeks of Samos and Potidaea and Byzantium. The Funeral Speech

is a glorification of Athens as a city-state, and of the institutions and ideals of the Athenian city-state. About Athens as an Imperial state Thucydides lets Pericles be significantly and ominously silent. It is only twenty chapters later, after the Plague, when the clouds were thick upon the horizon, that he makes Pericles expound his views on the subject. They are the views of Cleon a year later, and of all the subsequent speakers during the war. Athens, so free in her own ideals and institutions, is for the rest of Greece a *τύραννος πόλις*, a task-mistress and a tyrant: her own unique and glorious self-development has imposed this harsh necessity upon her. If she abdicated her tyranny, she would abdicate her power: and if she abdicated her power, all the ideals of the Funeral Speech would go with it—*ὥς τυραννίδα γὰρ ἤδη ἔχετε αὐτήν, ἣν λαβεῖν μὲν ἄδικον δοκεῖ εἶναι, ἀφεῖναι δὲ ἐπικίνδυνον*.

This was the mood of the changed Pericles after the Plague. The conception of empire with which he entered upon the war, so far as we can detect it behind the sombre silence of Thucydides, was very different. It is revealed, I think, in that curious passage in which Pericles is made to dwell upon the nature of friendship between nations. We have made our friends not by receiving, but by conferring, benefits (*οὐ γὰρ πάσχοντες εὖ ἀλλὰ δρῶντες κτώμεθα τοὺς φίλους*); it is true, he goes on, that the friend who

receives the benefit is not always so grateful as he should be. But Athens is above all such sordid calculations. We did not make our friends through motives of self-interest, in order to get something back from them. We are the only state in the world which has ever conferred benefits on other states, not out of mere diplomatic calculations of self-interest, but fearlessly, because we put our trust in freedom (*μόνοι οὐ τοῦ συμφέροντος μάλλον λογίσμῳ ἢ τῆς ἐλευθερίας τῷ πίστῳ ἀδεῶς τινα ὠφελοῦμεν*).

What does Pericles mean? He means that Athens gave more to her subjects than she got from them. The reference to 'freedom' makes it quite clear that this was the thought intended. For Athens did, as a matter of fact, confer freedom upon her allies when, in the first instance, she rescued them from Persia. But that motive for her connection with them ceased in 447, at the treaty with Persia. When therefore Pericles using the present tense (*ὠφελοῦμεν*) asserts that, at that moment in 431, the allies got more from Athens than he gave, he means something else.

What an amazing statement it is that Thucydides has put into his mouth! Athens was at that time maintaining the largest army and the largest fleet in Greece without a single direct tax upon the majority of her citizens. She had for half a generation been engaged in building enormous public works—temples, theatres,

treasuries, dockyards, fortifications, paying the workmen out of the pockets of other people. She had monopolized the shipping and the markets of the Aegean world by her power of intimidating all her rivals with a fleet which she did not pay to maintain.

Every year her allies sent her 600 talents of tribute, and their soldiers and sailors, at half the Athenian rate of pay, came to serve in her armaments. Every year hundreds of her allies were forced to make the wearisome journey to Athens, to spend their savings in hotels, in shops, in custom-houses, in law-court fees to swell the national resources of Athens. And yet 'we have made our friends not by receiving but by conferring benefits.' The mere connection with Athens, the mere fact of being a small fragment or appendage of the greatest and most glorious state in the world outweighs all vulgar and material considerations of profit and loss.

That is the Periclean theory of Empire—Periclean Imperialism in its best and most Utopian form. Athens is the perfect city—the type and model of all cities that have ever been, just as her art is the type and the model of all art that has ever been. But even the perfect city needs ships and money to maintain its position in a warring world. It is a great privilege for the allies to be allowed to minister to Athens by supplying them—a privilege for which (owing, Pericles says, to the incurable

infirmity of human nature) they are not sufficiently grateful.

It is difficult to state the theory without a touch of cynicism: but there is no touch of cynicism in the passages where it is expounded. The glory of helping Athens to assert her ideals against the Philistinism of Corinth and the drill-sergeant morality of Sparta is recounted by Thucydides just as gravely and just as quietly as the contradictory theory in the Melian Dialogue. This is what Thucydides makes us read in 416, when Periclean Imperialism, like Periclean Patriotism, had vanished for ever. 'The real war we are fighting is not one against Sparta—for one imperial state knows how to treat another—but against our subjects: we have to prevent them from ever climbing up into our throne' (*ἐστὶ δὲ οὐ πρὸς Λακεδαιμονίους ἡμῖν ὁ ἀγὼν, ἀλλ' ἣν οἱ ὑπήκοοι πον τῶν ἀρξάντων αὐτοῖ ἐπιθέμενοι κρατήσωσιν*). Periclean Imperialism has tumbled down like a pack of cards. One touch of brutality has turned the privileged friends and allies into sullen and rebellious slaves. That was the end of Periclean Imperialism: and Thucydides takes care, in the speeches, to let us follow each step in the process of degradation.

Looked at in the light of after events, as Thucydides saw it in 403, this process of degradation must have seemed almost inevitable. Athens and her ideals stood alone in a warring world: she was indeed great and powerful, but

not more great and powerful than the united forces of all the Greek states who misunderstood her ideals. To maintain her power she must inevitably use as instruments states that did not understand her ideal. In other words, in order to realize her ideals she must begin by acting counter to them. In order to show men the greatness of the Perfect City she must fetter the freedom of the less perfect cities. For a perfect city which exercised no power in the council of nations, which cut itself off, like a philosopher's Utopia, from all the practical issues of international life, was a conception abhorrent to every Athenian. It was that quietism (*ἀπραγμοσύνη*) which the fifth-century Athenian was taught from his cradle to detest.

πράσσειν σὺ πόλλ' εἴωθας ἢ τε σὴ πόλις

(You and your city are accustomed to busying yourselves with many things.)

says the Theban Herald in the Supplikes of Euripides. Yes, replies Theseus, the ideal embodiment of Athenian policy :

τοιγὰρ πονοῦσα πολλὰ πόλλ' εὐδαιμονεῖ.

(For to her much labour brings much happiness.)

Here was a grave contradiction, which could not long remain concealed, even behind the Olympian phrases of Pericles. Thucydides shows us over and over again, as the war goes on, the terrible conflict of spirit to which Athenians were reduced, because their ideals pulled

them in one direction, and their desire to realize them in another. If only they lived in Utopia, if only they lived as far away from the petty conflicts of the Greek world as the Corcyraeans, it would be so easy to practise virtue. The more invincible and inaccessible a man is, he makes the Corinthians say, the more reasonable it is to expect him to practise justice and virtue. When once Athens is invincible and inaccessible, he thought, when once she has finally crushed this heavy-handed Spartan incubus, when once she is acknowledged by all men to be the Queen of Greece and the most powerful of all earthly cities—then the justice and virtue she seems now to make light of will return to her, never more to depart. All civilized nations who have passed through the agony of a war know this mood. All civilized nations know that at best war is doing evil that good may come. All civilized nations know the conflict between ideals and opportunities. But none have ever carried opportunism to such fatal and tragic results as the Athenians. What shall it profit a nation if it gain the whole world and lose its own soul? Thucydides has chosen to show us how the inward vision with which Periclean Athens entered upon the war died away gradually before her eyes, till she was left fighting blindly and madly, with frenzied and murderous energy—for nothing at all! *ἐστὶ δὲ οὐ πρὸς Λακεδαιμονίους ἡμῖν ὁ ἀγών.*

I have spoken of the plague and the war fever

as the two causes which killed the political ideals of Periclean Athens. I have said so because Thucydides says so. It is not for nothing that he puts the Funeral Speech and the Plague in consecutive chapters. It is not for nothing again that his account of the crowning sin of Athenian Imperialism, the subjugation of Melos, is written with close and almost verbal reference to the chapters in which he describes the *στάσις* at Corcyra. The *στάσις* is for Thucydides every bit as much a disease as the Plague, and he diagnoses it with the same calm and searching finger. It is the disease called war fever—the fever which racked France for twenty-five years after the Revolution and which Japan, with a courage higher than all the courage of soldiers, has just succeeded in cauterizing out of her system. But are the Plague and the war fever between them sufficient to explain the awful change which came over the minds of Athenians in the generation between 432 and 404, between Pericles and Theramenes, between the serenity of Sophocles and the clouded mysticism of the exiled Euripides. This change, the greatest, probably, which has ever passed over a society in so short a space of time, which in thirty years changed the best Athenians from impulsive enthusiasts into morose psychologists, from Elizabethans to Victorians, was surely due to some deeper cause than a passing epidemic and a troubled political horizon. It was due, say

all moderns, to a deep-rooted and wide-spreading spiritual movement : it was due to the Sophists. What attitude then, we must ask, did Thucydides take towards the Sophists ? Why does he not devote a chapter to their influence ? Why does he leave to Aristophanes the task of diagnosing the working of their poisonous ideas ?

The answer is very simple. Thucydides did not think the Sophists the cause of Athenian degradation, because he was himself under their influence. They were an integral part of the Athens of his dreams. Pericles and Aspasia and all their circle, to which, we may be sure, the young Thucydides had his entrée, were quite as much under the influence of the sophistical movement as the Alcibiades or the Critias or the Antiphon of thirty years later. Who else but the Sophists taught Thucydides to write that tortured and antithetical Attic, to telescope his ideas into close-packed and Meredithian sentences, to apply the touchstone of criticism to mythology and to Homer, to explain politics by psychology and destiny by the analysis of tendencies ? Not only Thucydides the writer, but Thucydides the thinker and the traveller, is the offspring of the sophistical movement. And, like Pericles, he saw nothing in the teaching of the Sophists which was incompatible with his life's ideals. Like Pericles he gave rein to his intellect, and he had no inkling that the ideal

man of the Sophists, the *εὐτράπελος* of the Funeral Speech, would turn out to be an Alcibiades, with no religion, no patriotism, no self-sacrifice, and a debauched and over-critical intellect.

Thucydides was not, of course, blind to the evil influence exercised by the Sophists over the democracy during the war—to the rise of demagogues, to the power of rhetoric, to the degeneration of the Assembly into a frivolous debating-hall. But that, he would say, was not due to the Sophists. It was due to the Philistines. It was due to the opponents of the Sophists. It was due to middle-class ruffians like Cleon, who had caught some of the easier tricks of the sophistical dialectic without possessing the intellect properly to apply them. It is very important, in this connection, to understand Thucydides' attitude to Cleon. Cleon is for him a man who has been bitten by the plague and lost his patriotism: his one object in life is to get on. He has been bitten by the war fever, and has lost his Imperialism: he regards the allies no longer as friends but as enemies, actual or potential. But he has not been bitten by the Sophists: he is in fact (as we know also from Aristophanes) their deadliest and bitterest enemy. None of this shoddy intellectualism for him. He likes good blunt, downright, Anglo-Saxon commonsense: he is the practised, straightforward, efficient, go-a-head, business-

like politician. Give me, he says, a regime of consistent mediocrity, stupidity if you like : it is better than the flashy dexterities of our intellectuals (*ἀμαθία μετὰ σωφροσύνης ὠφελιμότερον ἢ δεξιότης μετὰ ἀκολάσιας*). To Thucydides the really evil thing about Cleon's argumentation is not its apparently sophistical form, not the fact that he can discuss the question of putting several thousand Greeks to death purely from the point of view of Athenian self-interest, without one single hint or suggestion of a higher Justice or Humanity—he himself would have done the same had he spoken in the Assembly—it was Cleon's unconscionable and outrageous stupidity. He has made this quite clear for us in the speech of Diodotus : Diodotus picks Cleon's arguments to pieces one by one, and shows that they are unstatesmanlike arguments, that Cleon has no knowledge of human nature, that clemency is on the whole and under the circumstances the right policy, that an inhabited Mitylene will pay tribute, while an uninhabited Mitylene will not. Macchiavelli himself could not have stated the practical issues more dryly. Diodotus' speech is not, as is generally said, a piece of cynicism : nor is the case presented by the Melians in the Dialogue cynical. They are both given by Thucydides as pieces of sound and reasoned statesmanship, such statesmanship as Pericles, had he lived to see affairs reduced to such an imbroglio, would have been

the first to approve. If Cleon has succeeded in making the allies hostile, Athens must just accept the situation : she must face Sparta and the allies simultaneously : she must queen it even with all Greece against her. But to sell the inhabitants of tribute-bearing Greek cities into slavery is to cut off her sources of supply. It is not so much that it is unideal : the war itself was unideal. It is that it was amateurish finance—silly, unpractical, unreasonable. If Cleon had only understood those Sophists whom he imitated (it must be confessed) with a certain verve of his own, it would have been impossible for him to be so short-sighted. It was such Philistines as he and not the intellectuals who ruined Athens.

It is thus that we are brought back again, by an unexpected road, through Pericles and Aspasia and Anaxagoras, to Thucydides the practical student of affairs—the financier, the mine-owner, the statistician, the master of business detail. For Thucydides, as for Machiavelli, nothing is beneath the statesman's notice—nothing is too vulgar or too commonplace or too un-Utopian : everything can be made into a means towards his end. We have discussed Thucydides the Patriot, and Thucydides the Imperialist : we have looked into his ideals and seen how he watched their extinction. Let us now turn to Thucydides the practical politician, the student of means as

well as of ends, of opportunities as well as of ideals.

There again Thucydides is a Periclean : and the disappointments that he suffered through the stupidity of Pericles' successors must have done almost as much to break his heart as the gradual disappearance of Periclean ideals from the minds of his countrymen. For he has emphasized Pericles the practical statesman, the opportunist, almost more strongly than Pericles the idealist. Pericles is for him the statesman who went to work with an enormous margin (*τοσοῦτον τῷ Περικλεῖ ἐπερίσσευσεν*), the man who, in one of the most precarious and difficult of all political enterprises—the prosecution of a war for supremacy—provided against every possible contingency of failure. Pericles only made one single miscalculation (*πρᾶγμα μόνον δὴ πάντων ἐλπίδος κρείσσον γεγενημένον*) : the Plague ; and even the Plague did not seriously draw upon his reserve. At the time of the Plague Athens was still practically untaxed, and five years afterwards, even under Cleon's regime, she had an offer of peace which Pericles would undoubtedly have accepted, guaranteeing to her all that she had originally gone to war to obtain. The rupture of the negotiations after Sphacteria was Cleon's really crowning act of folly : it was, as Thucydides calls it, *ἀνήκεστον*, a sin that could not be expiated. And it was this not only because it showed that Athens was fighting, not

as she professed, for supremacy, but for the annihilation (*δουλεία*) of her enemies, but also because it was contrary to all considerations of sound tactics. Thucydides always has his eye on the money-bags—on the capital in the Acropolis, on the income from the allies, on the available number of triremes, sailors and hoplites : and sometimes his bitterness over the sheer stupidity of the Jingoës overmasters even his abhorrence of their so-called ideals. When we come to study the details of the war more minutely, we will study it as Thucydides would have liked us to study it, with the financial situation, Athens' resources in money and men, clearly before us—as clearly, that is, as the fragmentary records of the inscriptions permit.

Perhaps I ought not to have spoken of this side of Thucydides' ideas as embodying means rather than ends : I do not think that he would have used such an expression himself. He dwelt so much upon these means, he allowed his mind to become so much occupied with talents and triremes and tribute, that power and the material display of power seemed to him sometimes almost an ideal in themselves. He likes bigness in things, quite irrespective of their greatness : he loves to contemplate things done on a large and lavish scale—*δύναμις*, which is his word for conveying greatness, often merely means material greatness or the display of greatness. This sometimes comes out in his history

in curious ways. For instance, he thinks it necessary to apologize for the Age of Tyrants and to explain why, notwithstanding the great increase in Greek resources, which took place at this time, history has nevertheless nothing demonstrable to show for it (*ἐπράχθη δ' οὐδὲν ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἔργον ἀξιόλογον*). This accounts, too, for the inexpressible satisfaction with which he contemplates the Trojan War, the first great military and naval achievement of Greece. He talks of it in the same tones of soothing satisfaction as our war ministers used to speak of the transport of a quarter of a million soldiers to a country six thousand miles away. Perhaps the Trojan War was a very unnecessary campaign: but after all it was almost worth the expense for the sake of such an impressive and tangible demonstration of the greatness of Agamemnon's Greece. Even where he is describing the Sicilian expedition he allows a hint of his veneration for business or for bigness to creep in: it was the finest and the costliest armament ever sent out by a Greek state, he tells us, relapsing momentarily into the mood of the crowd that stood watching its departure from the beach (*παρασκευὴ γὰρ αὕτη πρώτη ἐκπλεύσασα μιᾶς πόλεως, δυνάμει Ἑλληνικῇ πολυτελεστάτῃ δὴ καὶ εὐπρεπεστάτῃ τῶν ἐς ἐκείνον τὸν χρόνον ἐγένετο*), and a few chapters later he explains why he has confined his statement to Greek states. Carthage, he says, could be the most powerful state of

the day (δυνατοὶ δ' εἰςὶ μάλιστα τῶν νῦν, βουλευθέντες); they have the best finances, and finance is the controlling power in war and in everything else (ὅθεν ὁ τε πόλεμος καὶ τὰλλα εὐπορεῖ). Did Thucydides think that finance alone could have built the Parthenon?

This habit of fixing his mind on Power and not asking what it was used for, comes out most clearly in the Introduction. His account of early Greece is nothing else but an account of a development, not of civilization, but of material resources: improvement of communications, growth of armies and navies, foundation of cities in favourable commercial situations. It culminates in the Persian War: and the Persian War is not for Thucydides, as it is for his posterity, the record of a contest between a David and a Goliath: it is the demonstration of the superiority of the resources of Greece over the resources of the East: it marks the assertion of the Greek command of the sea. The Persian Wars, he says, left Athens and Sparta the two strongest Greek states, the one on land, the other at sea. And he goes on to make Pericles demonstrate that in a country like Greece, land power is nothing and sea power is everything. The result of which is that Periclean Athens became the more powerful, and that the war which she fought to ensure her supremacy was the biggest war on record (μέγαν καὶ ἀξιολογώτατον τῶν προγεγενημένων). And

thus Athens turns out to be not only the best and most beautiful of cities but also the richest and strongest, great not only in her ideals but in her capacity to realize them and carry them out. Perhaps the cruellest touch in all Thucydides is when, at the end of the Sicilian expedition, faithful to this rather material habit of mind, he says that the Syracusan victory was of all Greek achievements recorded the most glorious to the victors and the most ill-starred for the vanquished (*τοῖς τὲ κρατήσασι λαμπρότατον καὶ τοῖς διαφθερεῖσι δυστυχέστατον*). The victory, he says, in all good faith, is glorious to the Syracusans: for have they not conquered the biggest and the most expensive fleet that ever set sail from Greece? It is glorious, because it is a display of power, of *δύναμις*. Nevertheless, at the same time, as we know, and Thucydides knew, it was only one link in a chain of events which brought confusion and anarchy upon Syracuse, invited the African into Sicily, and within ten years of the battle in the Great Harbour almost blotted out the Greek civilization of the island. Such are the glories of war!

These things Thucydides knew: but he has not chosen to dwell on them. He prefers war, with all its glories and horrors, to the inglorious futilities of peace. 'Many of the younger generation readily engaged in the war,' he tells us, thinking of his own youthful enthusiasm when Pericles crossed his Rubicon by accepting the Corcyraean

alliance. And although he lived to probe the horrors of war almost to their depths, to see the whole fabric of Greek society and all its creeds and pieties outraged by a generation of continuous hostilities, he never quite came to regard war as itself a deplorable, if sometimes a necessary, evil. He never quite came to agree with Euripides, or to put down men's lust for war to some curious infirmity in their imagination. If only the voters in the Assembly, says Euripides (in one of his earlier and less bitter plays), could have the vision of death before their eyes as they gave their decision, Greece would never have gone mad over fighting.

ὅταν γὰρ ἔλθῃ πόλεμος ἐς ψῆφον πόλεως
οὐδείς ἔθ' αὐτοῦ θάνατον ἐκλογίζεται,
εἰ δ' ἦν παρ' ὄμμα θάνατος ἐν ψήφου φορᾷ
οὐκ ἂν ποθ' Ἑλλὰς δοριμανὴς ἀπώλετο.

Thucydides never quite came to agree with Euripides, because he was not so tender-hearted, because he was rather a clear-sighted statesman than (let us say it boldly) an entirely civilized man: because he was not the ideal historian who is both of these. He can see only too clearly, and explain only too poignantly, the effect of war upon states and societies: but he cannot see, or never lets us know that he sees, its effect upon individual men, women and children. He tells us how the wild Thracians broke into a school in the peaceful Boeotian village of Mycalessus: but he tells it as an illus-

tration of the dangers attendant upon the employment of mercenaries. He tells us about the selling of the women and children of Melos and Scione into slavery: but he tells it, in his Macchiavellian manner, to illustrate the stupidity of the Jingoës. He does not really care about all that the brutal heel of war trampled down—the quiet homely country life in the smaller Greek states, the old-world sentiment of the Panhellenic gatherings, the memories of the days before power became a passion and Empire a calculation; above all he does not care for the *personae mutae* of the whole drama of his book, the women, the children, and the slaves. When you have read those proud and stirring chapters in which he describes the sailing of that biggest and most expensive fleet that ever left the shores of Greece, when you have listened to the blare of the trumpets and watched the triremes racing across the bay to Aegina, write the one word TROADES on the top of the page. It will serve to remind you of all that Thucydides has left out—of the sad-hearted crowds walking slowly back to Athens in the dusk, of the empty, joyless, anxious, impoverished life at home, of the widows and the orphans and the prisoners and the butcheries to be, of the slaves to whom these triremes recalled scenes of shame at Melos or Scione or Potidaea, of the innumerable human tragedies which this one day's working has irrevocably knit.

Then you will realize that Thucydides—the patriot and the imperialist—was after all but a Periclean, that the insight of Euripides and the wisdom of Plato were beyond him. If he had joined those to what he has given us, I do not know where we should look for his equal.

IV

WAS GREEK CIVILIZATION BASED ON SLAVE LABOUR ?

I

EVERYONE who approaches the study of Greek life in the historical spirit, with a serious desire to understand and judge it as it really was, must have been pulled up sharp in his reading by the ugly spectre of slavery ; and most feeling men, I think, find their enjoyment of Greek literature and art, of Homer and Sophocles, Thucydides and Plato a little dimmed by the abiding presence of its shadow. In making up our account with the Greeks, of our debt to their civilization and the value of their example, the slaves cannot be left out of the reckoning ; and, in this sense, it is true to say that every sincere student of Greek life and thought has formed, whether consciously or not, his own theory of slavery. He cannot be content to regard it as a mere remnant or survival which persisted, contrary to Greek instincts, as an accidental excrescence upon Greek civilization. He must see it as the Greeks saw it, appraise its purpose

and meaning as the Greeks appraised them, and thus gradually embody it, for all its strangeness, into that harmonious conception of Greek life to which it is the object of all true Greek study to attain.

It is this, perhaps, which explains the extraordinary confusion and perplexity which still prevail upon this subject. Everyone has his own theory of slavery. But, here as elsewhere in the fragmentary state of our knowledge of Greek life, no one has a touchstone by which his theory can be tested. Every decade or half decade sees a new book upon the subject; the same authors are ransacked; the same evidence is marshalled; the same references and foot-notes are transferred, like stale tea-leaves, from one learned receptacle to another; but there is a most startling variety about the resultant decoctions.

Perhaps the best way of emphasizing the need for a new method of inquiry is to put side by side some of the more glaring contradictions which emerge from a study of the literature of the subject. We are told by Bücher, and the Hegelian school of economists, following Aristotle, that slavery was the necessary and natural basis of City-State life: and by another school of thought that it was a mere passing phase in its development. Of those who think it a passing phase some, like Wallon, seem to regard it as a survival from more primitive and barbarous

conditions ; others, like Burckhardt, as necessitated by the demand for agricultural labour after the outburst of colonization in the eighth and seventh centuries ; others, like Francotte, as connected with the demand for foreign labourers and craftsmen due to the rise in the standard of comfort throughout the cities of Greece in the sixth and fifth centuries ; others, like Meyer, as inseparable from the development of a capitalist system of international trade and industry in the larger commercial centres, especially in the fifth century ; others, like Pöhlmann, as marking the decline of City-State civilization into a system of ruthless individualistic exploitation.

Nor are historians any better agreed as to the consequences of its introduction. We are told by Beloch and Mauri that the influx of slaves caused severe and lasting competition between slave and free labour, and by other writers that it caused practically no competition : and of these latter some say, arguing from Plato and Aristotle, that the influx of slaves cast a stigma upon manual labour so that free men voluntarily withdrew from it, and took to soldiering and politics : others, like Francotte, that slave and free went on contentedly working side by side ; others, like Guiraud, that an equilibrium was established, slaves monopolizing certain occupations and free workers retaining others.

Thus the historians are agreed neither about the chronology, nor the importance, nor the

manner, nor the causes, nor the consequences of the introduction of slave-labour into the Greek City-States. Less ambitious writers, looking at the matter, not from the historical, but from the static point of view, endeavouring to understand the part which slavery played as a settled institution in the normal or 'average' City-State, are little less contradictory. Some of them regard the City-State as a community sharply divided into two classes, of which the one enjoyed leisure for culture and citizenship, and the other laboured under its direction. Others regard the whole City-State community, citizens, aliens and slaves, as peculiarly homogeneous, and contrast it with the sharp divisions in modern life between capital and labour, and between skilled and unskilled occupations. There is naturally an equal disagreement about the character, treatment and value of the slaves. Some writers, following Cairnes, regard it as an axiom that slave-labour is in the long run more expensive than free labour; others, following Boeckh, bring figures to prove that it is cheaper. Some writers, like Professor Gilbert Murray, say that the Greeks treated their slaves with remarkable humanity; others, like Mr. Paterson, that they treated them most brutally. Some writers follow Aristotle in regarding the slaves as too unintelligent to be free, and their restraint in captivity as an act of educational benevolence; others declare that they were intelligent enough

to be responsible for some of the most delicate work of Greek craftsmanship, and some of the most elaborate operations of Greek finance.

There would be no difficulty in extending this catalogue of contradictions ; but it is already sufficiently long to show that what we need is not a re-statement of the scattered and fragmentary evidence or a new induction on the basis of that evidence, but some secure foundation upon which future scholars can build without fear of wasting their labour upon an impossible task.

Such a foundation is afforded by the investigations of economists who have studied the working of slavery in more recent times. Modern economists, notably Cairnes, in his masterly book on *The Slave Power*, have approached the subject without prepossession, in the light of our knowledge of the economic behaviour of man, and have built up a theory of the economics of slavery which, if still far from perfected, forms the natural starting-point for a student of slavery under Greek or any other conditions. Let us take their results and see how they can be applied to slavery as it existed in the Greek City-State.

What is slavery ? The latest writer on the theory of slavery, Dr. Nieboer, gives this definition : ' Slavery is the fact that one man is the property or possession of another, beyond the limits of the family proper.' In other words, slavery is an economic system which places

capital and labour in the same hands, in which labour is itself merely so much living capital for the capitalist master. As Mill says, 'All the produce belongs to the master. The food and other necessities of his labouring are part of his expense. The labourers possess nothing but what he thinks fit to give them, and until he thinks fit to take it back; and they work as hard as he chooses, or is able to compel them.'

What are the conditions which will naturally grow up under such a system?

First, what will be the distinctive features of work performed under such a system?

In the first place, it will be *reluctant* work. The slave has no motive for working and every motive for abstaining from work; he will therefore only work under physical compulsion or the fear of it; and will naturally tend to be employed in occupations where such compulsion is easily exercised. Slave-labour is therefore profitable in occupations (such as plantation work) where supervision is easy and inexpensive, and tends to become less profitable as supervision becomes more difficult and costly.

Secondly, it will be *unskilful* work. A slave has no motive for acquiring skill, and even if he acquired it, could not be relied upon to use it or be entrusted with valuable apparatus or materials.

Thirdly, it will be *unversatile* work. A reluctant unskilful worker needs to be drilled into

his work till he performs it mechanically. He must therefore be found work which is regular and unchanging in its processes ; for any alteration will entail time and expense in drilling him into new habits.

Fourthly, it will be purely *manual* and *physical*: for brain work cannot be satisfactorily set in motion by physical compulsion. A slave is therefore most valuable in the prime of life, and decreases in value as he gets older, till he is no longer worth the cost of his keep. He will therefore tend to be treated just well enough to cause him to survive to the end of his working time.

Slave-labour then is reluctant, unskilful, unversatile and physical in character. What other conditions of a slave-system can be discovered ?

Fifthly, slavery involves a capital outlay. Slave-labour is sometimes spoken of as cheap labour. Whether, in the long run, it is cheaper than free labour depends on a number of very varying considerations ; but it is certainly more expensive in its initial stages : for a labourer is only hired, while a slave is bought outright. Employers, and particularly small employers, will therefore naturally endeavour, by the exercise of compulsion, to recoup themselves as quickly as possible for their outlay.

Sixthly, slavery involves a large element of risky speculation ; for a slave may die of disease, or commit suicide, or escape : or his employment may cease and he be left on his master's hands.

Slaves are therefore not generally employed in occupations which lead to definite diseases (such as rubber-gathering in a swamp or agriculture in a malarious country), but only in occupations which gradually lower the vitality.

Seventhly, the slave, though unversatile, has yet a double function ; he can be used not only to work for his master, but to breed for his master. Whether slaves are allowed to breed depends again on a number of varying considerations ; but experience seems to show that slavery has never been self-supporting for more than brief periods of time. The American slave territory, for instance, was gradually divided off into slave-breeding and slave-consuming regions.

Eighthly, slavery is unsettling to the community ; for, whereas the ordinary wage-earner can only lose, in the long run, by war and social unrest, the slave can only gain. Hence a slave society lives in constant fear of an uprising, and is really in a state of chronic civil war. In the cost of keeping slaves must therefore be reckoned, as Plato and Aristotle were well aware, the expenses of police and governmental supervision, and of the maintenance of defensive forces, to cope with the hostility of the countries from which the slaves are drawn. A slave society will therefore tend to be a military society.

Ninthly, slave labour is alien labour. Under nearly every slave system slaves have actually been imported from outside into the community

in which they work ; but even where that is not the case, they will be regarded as aliens and representatives of a different civilization. There will therefore tend to be no interchange of sympathy or moral feeling between master and slave.

Lastly, and most important of all, slave-labour interferes with the work of production by free-labour. It interferes in three ways : it causes the withdrawal of a number of men from production to supervision and national defence ; it diffuses a general sentiment against manual labour and any form of concentrated activity ; and more especially it drives free labourers out of the occupations in which the slaves are engaged. Just as, by Gresham's law, bad coins drive out good, so it has been found by experience that, in any given occupation or range of occupations, slave-labour drives out free ; so that it is even difficult to find recruits for the higher branches of an occupation if it is necessary for them to acquire skill by serving an apprenticeship side by side with slaves in the lower.

This leads to grave consequences ; for the men driven out of these occupations are not themselves rich enough to live on the labour of slaves. They therefore tend to form an intermediate class of idlers who pick up a living as best they can—the class known to modern economists as ' mean whites ' or ' white trash,' and to students of Roman history as ' clientes ' or ' faex Romuli.'

Such a class tends to emphasize both the social unrest and the military and aggressive character of a slave-state ; for politics and warfare remain respectable even after trade, industry and other forms of activity are discredited. A slave society is therefore a society divided sharply into three classes—masters, mean whites, and slaves ; and the middle class is an idle class, living on the community, or on warfare, or on the upper.

But there is still another result. The general sentiment against productive work leads to a state of affairs in which the slaves tend to be the only producers, and the occupations in which they are engaged the only industries of the country. In other words, the community will rely for its wealth upon occupations which themselves admit of no change or adaptation to circumstances, and which, unless they supply deficiencies of labour by breeding, are in perpetual need of capital. But this capital cannot be found elsewhere in the community. It must therefore be sought abroad : and a slave community will tend, either to engage in aggressive warfare, or to become indebted for capital to neighbours with a free-labour system, and ultimately to drift into a condition of economic dependence upon them. Thus a slave community is not a self-sufficient community ; its production is confined to certain staples which conform to the conditions necessary for the profitable use of slave-labour, and it is dependent

for almost everything else, including the workers who are needed for the production of its own staples, upon its neighbours.

Such, in brief, tends to be the economic condition of a community with an extensive system of slave-labour. The analysis is based upon Cairnes' account of the economic condition of the Southern States of the American Union previous to the War of Secession, but all points of only local applicability have been carefully eliminated. The conclusions follow irresistibly from the premisses ; they can be verified, not only from the history of the Southern States, but from descriptive accounts of slave or semi-slave systems still in active operation in different parts of the world. I would refer particularly to the description of Mr. Nevinson in his book called *A Modern Slavery* of the coffee and cocoa plantations in Portuguese West Africa, which is an unconscious commentary on large parts of Cairnes' work and to Mr. Morel's books on the labour system in the Congo State.

How far are these conditions true of the Greek City-State ?

Before answering this question it may be well to point out that we possess a contemporary Greek treatise dealing, like Cairnes', with the theory of slavery. Why should we not use the analysis of Aristotle in preference to the analysis of Cairnes ? Because Aristotle was a moralist and Cairnes an economist. Aristotle's account

becomes intelligible when the conditions in which he wrote it are intelligible. But it does not help us to understand those conditions. For it is almost impossible to disentangle the two mingled strands in his thought : the Greek City as it was, and the Greek City as he, a Philosopher and a Conservative, wished it to be or wished to imagine it was. Therefore we miss in Aristotle the clear vision of the dispassionate political observer, and we miss also the exercise of trained economic reasoning. For instance, Aristotle's City-State is a slave-state, but it is a slave-state without mean whites, a state in which the middle class is to be the controlling power in government and the bulwark of order and sobriety. It is a state which is to be based on agriculture ; yet the question how ' living instruments ' are qualified, or can be trusted, to act as skilled field workers is left unanswered. It is a state with wealth enough to enable its citizens to enjoy leisure for contemplation ; yet this wealth is to be obtained neither by plunder and warfare without nor by enterprise in production within. It is a state in which there is an impassable gulf between master and slave, and where the slave only attains to virtue and happiness under the controlling guidance of his master : and yet, in a spirit of misapplied benevolence, the prospect of ultimate liberation is to be held up as a stimulus to exertion. This is not an exhaustive list of Aristotle's economic contradictions : but enough

has been said to show that writers like Bücher, or more recently Paterson, who base their views of ancient slavery on Aristotle's analysis of City-State conditions, are foredoomed to failure. We must stick for the present to economics and leave political and historical, as well as moral and Utopian, considerations out of the question. How far then are these conditions as sketched by Cairnes true of the Greek City-State?

At first sight they seem to bear no likeness at all to anything with which we are familiar in Greek life. Cairnes' slave-state is a community of slaves, loafers and slave-drivers, too savage to enjoy the refinements of civilization, and too poor, if it were not too savage, to pay for them. There is nothing here to remind us of the communities which, untaught and unaided, by sheer exercise of enterprise and insight, created the civilization of the Western world.

Yet attempts have been made to connect the two conceptions—to depict Greek civilization as the civilization of a typical slave-state. Greek democracy, we are told, was rendered possible by the leisure of a population of slave-owners; Greek physical beauty is attributed to their distaste for manual labour; and Greek art and philosophy to their freedom from practical cares and preoccupations. In the words of Bücher, 'Every activity undertaken for the sake of gain was injurious to the growth of corporate feeling and independence, and made men indifferent to

the good and beautiful and unfitted for war and politics.' It was for this reason, he goes on, that slavery was introduced, until 'even the poorer citizen was seldom without one or several slaves, and the rich often possessed many hundreds and even thousands.'

I quote this passage because it carries to its logical conclusion the familiar theory that the Greek City-State was a slave-state and Greek civilization based upon slave-labour. If the theory is to stand we must hold with Bücher that practically every Greek who participated in that civilization was a slave-owner and shared the characteristic Greek aversion to manual labour. But notice the contradictions in which it is involved. The Greek has leisure for politics and contemplation, but at the same time he is a capitalist supervising the labour of 'one or several' or 'many hundreds' of slaves, from whom he draws his income. He has a fundamental objection to manual labour, yet some of the finest monuments of his civilization are worked in marble, bronze, and terra-cotta. Who built the Parthenon? If freemen, then they degraded themselves to the manual work of slaves; if slaves, then they were as civilized as the masters whose civilization they are supposed to be rendering possible. Even if we had no literature to help us, if we did not know that Greeks met daily, to the disgust of King Cyrus, to chaffer in the market-place and that their

merchants penetrated from the Crimea to Marseilles, the remains of Greek architecture alone would suffice to destroy the fable that the Greeks were a race of unpractical contemplative æsthetes who kept a tribe of tame drudges to minister to their material needs.

We are forced, then, to the conclusion, that the conditions which are the natural result of a system of slave-labour did not exist in Greece ; in other words, that the Greek City-State was not a slave-state.

Yet there is no doubt that the Greeks had slaves. It is difficult to be certain about the figures, but there is good ground for believing that Attica had a slave population of at least 100,000 out of a total population of something over a quarter of a million, and that in Chios (if not elsewhere) the proportion of slaves to free was still larger.

What is the explanation of the dilemma to which we seem to be reduced ? It lies, I think, in the interpretation of the word 'slave.' Cairnes' conclusions follow irresistibly from his premisses ; but it yet remains to be seen whether all or any of the Greek slaves were slaves in the economist's sense of the word.

The crucial fact about a slave in the economist's sense of the word is that he has no motive for working, or indeed for living at all, because he himself and all that he produces belong to another. From this all the other results follow.

A slave who has somehow or other been given a motive for working is therefore an entirely different being and occupies an entirely different position from a slave who has none. Such a motive can be given him in a number of ways: by allowing him to have a little property of his own, or to retain a small portion of the produce of his labour; or by placing him under a certain fixed arrangement in a position of responsibility; or, above all, by a conditional promise of freedom. But, however the motive is given, it creates a new class of labourer, who is far more closely allied to the wage-earners and craftsmen above him in the economic scale, than to the chattel-slaves below him. From the moment when a slave is allowed to own property or to make any engagement or contract with his master he ceases to be a chattel and becomes a human being: in legal phraseology, he ceases to be a thing and becomes a person. It is a long climb upwards from a few obols of pocket money and a position of trust as an assistant in a barber's shop in a low quarter of the Piræus to manumission and citizenship; but for the economist it is the first step on the ladder, the introduction of the motive to labour, which is all-important. A slave who can own property is serving his apprenticeship for freedom.

It is necessary therefore to distinguish sharply between these two sorts of slavery, which it will be convenient to call chattel-slavery and

apprentice-slavery. Both forms existed in the Greek City-State ; but the evidence seems to show that apprentice-slavery predominated. I believe that if the theory of apprentice-slavery could be worked out in the way in which chattel-slavery has been analysed by Cairnes and others, we should at last be in reach of a solution of the contradictions which have so long beset this question.

Let us endeavour to make a tentative analysis of the conditions of apprentice-slavery. It will be natural to start by comparing it with chattel-slavery. Of the ten conclusions which we reached in that field how many remain ? Obviously the first four, dealing with the characteristics of chattel-labour, disappear ; but some of the others remain. Apprentice-slavery still involves a capital outlay on the part of the slave-master ; it is still a risky speculation owing to possibilities of death or disease or escape or unemployment ; and the slave still has the double function of working and breeding. On the other hand, it will not necessarily cause social unrest, or remain alien to the community ; while the question whether, and if so, in what degree and directions, it interferes with non-slave production is obviously one that cannot be settled offhand. Here clearly are a number of open questions in which Cairnes' analysis will help us very little. It will be better to leave chattel-slavery aside and make a fresh start.

What is the position of a Greek slave-master who has purchased a cargo of barbarian slaves ? His first business will be to separate the chattels from the apprentices : to discover which of his purchases can be induced or trained to work willingly on his behalf, and which are too dangerous, or too sullen, or too weak, or too stupid to become more than brute manual workers under strict supervision. Some of the chattel-slaves he may succeed in getting ransomed ; some of them will probably not survive very long ; most of the remainder will go to mines and mills and quarries, whither we cannot follow them at present. He is left with a pack of reasonably docile pieces of property. The males will probably for the most part be boys or lads : for the men of fighting age will have perished or been disposed of ; and the females, though probably a little older, on the average, than the males, will few of them be beyond the prime of life, for there is no market for old women.

The object of the slave-master as an economic man is to give his apprentices the maximum amount of motive for working while leaving them the minimum amount of profit from their work. He owns the entire produce of their labour ; but by surrendering a portion of it he can increase the total amount. There is therefore a delicate balance between the increase in the amount surrendered and the increase in the total amount. The slave-master's object is to discover how much

of the produce it will be profitable for him to surrender in each case. Clearly this is not a simple problem: and the answers will be very different in different cases. In some cases it may be profitable to aim at a very high quality of work for a very short period, and in others at a steady low level of work over the better part of a lifetime. But there is one point upon which Greek theorists about apprentice-slavery (I am speaking now of theory, not of practice) seem to be generally agreed: that the only way to give an apprentice an adequate motive for working is to offer him some prospect of ultimate freedom. This is definitely stated by Aristotle though it contradicts the rest of his theory of slavery, and, less explicitly, by Xenophon in the *Æconomicus*; while the author of the *Economics* attributed to Aristotle, in his short discussion of the subject (which is full of valuable hints and suggestions) goes further and says: 'Slaves are willing to take trouble when freedom is the prize and the time is fixed.' In other words, it will pay our slave-master better to make an arrangement with his apprentices pledging them their freedom after a definite term of years or in a definite contingency than to keep them in a permanent state of suspense. Slaves working under such an arrangement have not indeed generally any legal security for freedom; but they have the security of custom: for it is to the interest of both parties alike that such arrangements should be con-

sidered binding. It is a one-sided bargain : for the master alone has usually the power of saying when, in his opinion, the slave's work and conduct have not come up to the specified level : but if the master is wise he will reserve this as a valuable coercive weapon only very rarely to be brought into use. The apprentice-slave's position will then resemble that of a prisoner under a fixed term of detention, who may have his penalty lengthened by breaking prison rules, or shortened by good conduct, but retains a reasonable measure of security for his ultimate freedom.

Our slave-master then has an informal or perhaps even a formal labour contract with his slaves over a term of years. Can we enter more closely into his calculations ? There are several considerations which will lead him, if he can secure as good, or nearly as good, a profit, to shorten the period of apprenticeship. In the first place there are the risks of death or disablement or escape or unemployment ; it is true that these risks are not nearly so great in the case of an apprentice as of a chattel : for chattel-slaves are apt to die, to use Mr. Nevinson's word, of sheer unhappiness ; it is true too that if a slave dies on the way to manumission his savings fall to his master. But there yet remains sufficient risk of loss to make the master (especially in the instability of Greek economic and political conditions) prefer quick to slow returns.

Secondly, and this is more important, it is much safer to have an establishment of short term slaves than of long term slaves. The object of the slave-master is to bind his slaves to himself and to separate them from one another. Corporate feeling or the rudiments of Trade-Unionism among the slaves will reduce his hold over them and diminish the output. They must be kept as obedient and tractable as possible, with all their energy directed upon their work, and the ultimate reward of their work—liberation. In this respect a household or workshop resembles a factory of unorganized wage-earners who are paid by the piece. The slave's time not being his own, his work must always have been tested by the piece. Now a workshop of short-term slaves continually being emptied and replenished will have far less corporate sense than a workshop of long-term slaves ; and the danger of organization among the slaves, encouraging them to be workshy or even rebellious, increases in proportion to the total number of slaves in the workshop, or in the community as a whole. It will therefore pay a slave-master, and a slave-owning community, to surrender some of the long-term profits on their slaves as a species of insurance money. For the presence of an excessive number of slaves in a city or workshop at any given time reacts on their general docility, causes unrest, necessitates drastic measures of repression, and reduces their

value by assimilating them, in treatment and sentiment, to chattels. This was noticed by Thucydides as being the case in the large slave-market at Chios.

All these considerations tend in favour of a short-term contract. There are, of course, counteracting considerations. The relation between a freedman and his former master is not an easy one ; and where there are trade-secrets, and, still more, where there are domestic secrets, involved, it may be highly unpleasant. Moreover the more skilful the slave, the more indispensable he will be likely to have made himself to his master. It is for this reason that masters generally tended to make a form of contract by which their freedmen were still bound to render them certain services, and endeavoured, so far as possible, to retain a hold over their activities.

Our representative slave-master then will give his apprentices a definite pledge of freedom : and the period of service will tend to be a short one. How short, is a very complicated question. But it will never extend beyond, and will tend to fall some years short of, the end of the workman's efficient period of labour. Can we analyse the slave-master's policy any further ?

We have seen that his object is to maintain his apprentices' docility, and to concentrate their efforts upon his service. But there is one way in which, by ceasing to be mere wealth-producing machines, they need not cease to do him service

—by breeding. It seldom pays to allow chattel slaves to breed ; but apprentice-slaves must be treated as human beings, and they are therefore allowed to form definite unions and, within limits, to have families. The Greeks restricted their families by exposing undesirable infants : and this practice was no doubt carried further among slave families than among free ; but it is clear from our authorities that it was customary for masters to allow household slaves to bring up at any rate small families of children. These children, of course, were the property of the slave-master, and often form the subject of special stipulations in the manumission contract. From the slave-master's point of view, that is, a good slave possesses not only the individualistic virtues of thrift, sobriety, industry, obedience, and honesty, but also the capacity to breed and bring up thrifty, sober, industrious, obedient, and honest children for the service of his master.

Another very important point in the slave-master's policy is his exercise of control. He can control his apprentices by setting his own interpretation upon the contract. But he can do more than this. Firstly, he can reduce an apprentice to a chattel by sending him to the mines. This must have been a constant threat (as we see from the Comedians) : but it can have been but rarely exercised, except in the case of incorrigibly idle, vicious, or cross-grained slaves ; for it injured both parties by reducing the slave's

value. And a slave very rarely, if ever, came back from the mines. Secondly, there is control by corporal punishment which, to judge from Aristophanes, was freely exercised. Thirdly, there is control against escape by intermunicipal arrangement. City-States which had reciprocal treaty arrangements generally stipulated for the extradition of runaway slaves: and except in time of war, they had little chance of escaping capture. And even in wartime a foreign slave would only exchange one master for another. The 20,000 slaves, mostly apprentices, who escaped from Attica during the occupation of Decelea merely glutted the slave-market in Bœotia. In all these ways the slave-master retains a control over his apprentices far more stringent and exacting than that of a modern employer over his wage-earners even if they are unprotected by combination, and even securer than the hold of an English master-craftsman in the Middle Ages, over his indentured apprentices, in the days when men could be punished for being workshy and every village provided stocks for runaways and vagrants.

Again, a slave-master in making his contract with an apprentice will do his best to surrender his property rights very dearly. We can see this from some of the extant manumission decrees. A slave is not simply set free at the end of his term of service; he is allowed to buy his freedom. What does he buy it with? With

the money which he has amassed during his years of service. In other words, the master surrenders, or partially surrenders, his claim over the produce of the slave's work for the future on condition of securing most, if not all, of that portion of his produce which he originally relinquished. The lot of a freedman under these conditions must have been an unenviable one. He was in a position of a worker who surrenders the savings of a lifetime at the approach of old age. Many of them must merely have exchanged slavery for a state of casual dependence upon their former masters. The master becomes a 'patron' and the slave a 'client.'

Two more points may be noticed in the slave-master's policy. First, that it is to his interest to give his apprentices as great a *feeling of freedom* as is compatible with retaining the produce of their labour. He will therefore try to increase their output by improving their morale and heightening their self-respect. This is probably one explanation of the special festivals which we find arranged for slaves in some of the Greek cities and for the consideration with which we so often find them treated. They might wear the same clothes as the poorer citizens and even elbow their betters in the streets, as the old Oligarch complains they did at Athens, provided it encouraged them to work harder and they did not ask for an increase in their allowance.

Secondly, the slave-master will endeavour as

far as possible to make them forget their original nationalities and become Hellenes. The apprentices are, of course, all or nearly all barbarians, Lydians, Phrygians, Thracians, Syrians, Paphlagonians, and so on ; but they must not be allowed to take a pride in their nationality. They must think of themselves rather as passing through the novitiate of Hellenism with the ultimate hope of becoming full citizens with a place in the Tribe and the Clan, beside some of their own old compatriots. Care was taken to prevent too many fellow-countrymen from collecting in the same household or workshop ; the apprentices were often rechristened with pleasant Greek names and of course compelled to make Greek their only language. Readers of the *Medea* will remember how Jason tells Medea, with unconscious Hellenic arrogance, how thankful she ought to be to him for her introduction into the cultured atmosphere of Greece where her arts can be appreciated and her reputation spread abroad.

Thou hast got
Far more than given. A good Greek land hath been
Thy lasting home, not barbary. Thou hast seen
Our ordered life and justice, and the long
Still grasp of law. Then all Hellas far and near
Hath learned thy wisdom, and in every ear
Thy fame is. Had thy days run on unseen
On that last edge of the world, where then had been
The story of the great Medea ?

This is surely but a glorified sample of many a patriarchal address to a company of apprentices.

So much for the policy of the representative slave-master. What can we discover about the other party to the bargain, the apprentice-slave himself? We leave aside for the present the question of his special occupations and aptitudes, and will consider only his general character and position.

In the first place he finds himself in a career where promotion is strictly and entirely by merit. If he works hard and shows capacity he can win his freedom in a few years; if he is lazy and obstinate he may die in captivity. This will sharpen his wits and make him steadier and more obedient; but it will also serve, as has been already suggested, to cut him off from his fellows and make him selfish and grasping. He will tend to resemble the copy-book heroes of self-help; at best he will develop into a typical self-made man.

Secondly, he will be the outcome of a somewhat severe process of natural selection; and he will be selected for his economic value. He will therefore most probably be exceptionally skilful and enterprising in his particular branch of work, whether manual or intellectual. This will be still more marked among freedmen, who represent the selected from a selection, and accounts for the reputation for general efficiency which that class of the community always enjoyed in the ancient world. Ancient man, particularly the ancient Greek, was far from being a repre-

sentative economic man: too many other interests entered into his life; but freedmen approximated far more nearly to the economist's standard, for they were selected for the possession of just those economic qualities and aptitudes.

Thirdly, the apprentice-slave will be tempted to shorten his period of service by working upon the feelings of his master. His master, as has been said, was not the impersonal owner of a large modern factory or business, but a capricious and excitable Greek with whom he was in daily contact. It is only natural that individual slaves should have endeavoured, by intrigue or by favouritism, to exercise influence over their masters. This could be done in many ways. A slave could make himself so indispensable in the conduct of his master's business as practically to be able to dictate his own terms. Or he could become the favourite of his master or his master's wife, and so win a commanding position. Or he could make himself the possessor of valuable information and so blackmail his master into a favourable agreement. All this opens a wide field for individual ingenuity and explains some of the familiar characteristics of the New Comedy slaves.

So far our inquiry has been purely hypothetical. In the following essay an attempt will be made to verify or illustrate these too purely economic chains of reasoning from the vast but fragmentary evidence of Greek authors themselves.

V

WAS GREEK CIVILIZATION BASED ON SLAVE LABOUR ?

II

So far we have proceeded by a hypothetical method. We have assumed slave-masters, chattels, and apprentices to be influenced entirely or mainly by economic motives, and endeavoured to work out a theory of Greek slavery on this basis. We did not discover, that is, what the condition of Greek City-State slaves actually was, but what it was always tending and trying to be, what it would have been if the Greeks and their slaves had not been open to other than economic influences. It was necessary to make this assumption in order to secure a foundation to build on; and it was necessary to emphasize, and even exaggerate, the distinction between chattels and apprentices.

But it must not be assumed that, in actual fact, there was a chasm between these two classes or that every apprentice-slave was actually working under the stimulus of an offer of freedom.

There is one region of slave work in particular, where the theory can only be applied with great reservations—the household. In speaking of slave-masters, chattels, and apprentices, theory tends to assume the chattels working in mines and quarries, the apprentices in manufacturing workshops, and the masters as modern business men. In the household, all these sharp distinctions are blurred, and economic motive is overlaid by a variety of other more comfortable influences. In Homeric days, before trade and manufacture were dissociated from household work, all slaves were household slaves, and large parts of our theory would not apply at all. Eumaios and Eurycleia would not be stimulated by the offer of freedom or the prospect of ending their days as unencumbered as the beggar Iros or the vagrant Odysseus. And the patriarchal household lingered on, of course, into the days of the full-fledged City-State, retaining many of its old economic traditions. We have the figure of the slave Paidogogos to remind us, firstly, that masters did not always get rid of their household slaves when they were past active work, and secondly, that such slaves were often as contented to die in captivity as to die free.

Moreover the household, with the variety of tasks which it provided, was a ground on which apprentices and chattels could meet and work together. We can see from our authorities how some large households consisted mainly of

chattels and drudges and others mainly of apprentices, and how, by skilful and considerate treatment, a clever householder could turn one into the other and so increase the value of his property. We are told this by Xenophon and again by Plato, in one of the many passages in which ancient writers seem to apprehend the distinction between the two classes of slaves: 'Different persons have got these two different notions of slaves in their minds. Some of them utterly distrust their servants, and, as if they were wild beasts, chastise them with goads and whips and make their souls three times, or rather many times as slavish as they were before; and others do just the opposite.' Here we have the clash between two contending economic motives, that of the plantation slave-driver who trusts only to physical compulsion, and that of the apprentice-master who relies on skill and persuasion. Thus it can be seen that, in spite of cross-currents, our analysis is not without value even for the household: and in proportion as the household merges, as in the City-State life it always tended to merge, into a farm or a shop or a manufactory, it can be applied with increasing security.

There is another region of servile labour in which our conclusions may seem not to apply, that of serfdom. Where do the Helots find a place in our analysis? Are they chattels or apprentices? For our theory will hardly allow them

to be a cross between the two. Have they a motive for their labour or have they not ?

This raises some interesting questions. The Helots, of course, were not the only serfs in the Greek world. They were the most conspicuous ; but they were only the survivors, and not the sole survivors, of a widespread system of servile labour on the land. In the period of fully developed City-State activity there were serf systems in Thessaly and Argos in mainland Greece, while such a system seems to have been a common way of getting agricultural labour done in the colonies which had a hinterland of docile barbarians. Our evidence about Greek colonial communities is very scanty, but we hear of systems of colonial serfdom at Byzantium, Syracuse, Cyrene, more doubtfully at Epidamnus, and above all at Heraclea, on the Black Sea, a prosperous agricultural community from which Aristotle drew many hints for his ideal City-State. Moreover, most important of all, the wisest political head among the fourth-century Athenians, Isocrates, mapping out the conquests of Alexander half a century before they took place, urges the Greeks to undertake an Asiatic expedition with the deliberate policy, apparently, of establishing Greek colonial communities on a basis of serfdom. In Greece proper the evidence shows that the system of serfdom originally existed in a number of places from which it had disappeared before the fifth century—at

Epidaurus, Sicyon, Corinth, Delphi and Heraclea in Trachis. We have then to deal with a system which worked well, or at least well enough to justify imitation, in the Greek colonies, but found a difficulty in maintaining itself in the mother country, where the serfs were Greek and were more or less homogeneous with their masters.

Was the serf a chattel or an apprentice? He was certainly not a chattel: for he worked without supervision, and he could not be sold out of the country. Serfs were always recognized by the ancients as being of a different status from ordinary bought slaves, and they bore a distinctive name in every locality. Nor was the serf a free labourer, for his liberty was seriously curtailed. What was he then? Not a free man, nor a piece of movable property, but a piece of fixed property, a *fixture* like the soil he tilled. The serf system existed in communities which wished to have their agricultural work done for them by slaves (as it is often done in tropical countries) but had discovered that agricultural labour is too highly skilled and too difficult of supervision to be undertaken by chattels. They therefore adopted a system by which the labourer was kept to his work, not by his master, but by the law. But they were driven to provide him further with a motive for working efficiently. That motive is provided by allowing the serf to retain a certain proportion of his labour, or rather of the produce he raises. In other words,

serfs are apprentice-slaves working with a peculiar and specialized motive. This motive was probably sufficient to maintain the system with tolerable success amongst unambitious barbarians in the colonies ; for the Greeks did not settle except where the natives were tractable, and the barbarians probably gained in security, and in other ways, as much as they lost in freedom by contact with their masters. The gradual diffusion of Hellenic customs and ideas among these apprentice serfs would indeed form a fascinating subject of study.

But among the mainland Greeks the system was less successful ; for Greeks did not acquiesce in being enslaved to Greeks and the motive offered them was not adequate to turn them into apprentices. Hence we find that serfdom in Greece proper tended either to disappear altogether, or to relapse into the barbarous atmosphere of chattel-slavery. No doubt Spartans ruled their Helots, as the Athenian slave-masters ruled their apprentices, by suppressing all attempts at organization, crushing their corporate spirit and holding out to individuals the prospect of earning their freedom by some conspicuous act of service. But side by side with these features of apprentice-slavery, Sparta presents many of the features of the typical chattel-slave state—the dependence on a single industry (in this case agriculture), the small number of slave-masters with an

increasing population of 'mean whites,' and a perpetual condition of social unrest and imminent civil war. In one respect Sparta fared even worse than an ordinary slave-state; for, as her masters did not live together with the serfs, it was impossible to control their rate of increase, and wholesale massacres of grown Helots had to be resorted to in order to keep their population within the limits of subsistence and control. It is true that, as one writer observes, 'the Spartans did their killing by night'; but when 2000 had to be killed at a time, the deed cannot have passed unnoticed. The other Greek serf-states, Argos, Thessaly and Crete, were faced with the same dilemma, but in a less acute and urgent form. Thus it may be said that among Greeks, serfdom falls under the head of chattel-slavery, and the states which are dependent upon it for the whole or the greater part of their labour are Slave-States in Cairnes' sense of the term, while among the barbarians it falls under the head of apprentice-slavery.

Let us now turn from theory to history and seek to verify or at least to illustrate our results from the texts, and thus to arrive at certain historical, as opposed to purely hypothetical, conclusions.

What do the texts tell us about the occupations in which slaves were employed, and the conditions under which they worked? We find

them engaged in practically every form of regular activity which the City-State world provided, from the most skilled to the most degrading. We find them in the arts and sciences, in trade and manufacture, in agriculture and mining ; as doctors, teachers, innkeepers, retail dealers of every kind, domestic servants, secretaries, policemen, prostitutes, confidants, and favourites. We find every variety of price set upon their services, and we find them exposed to every variety of treatment. It is just this diversity in the evidence which has caused so much confusion in its interpretation and given birth to so many theories.

But there is one clear distinction to be drawn. There are some occupations in which we find both slaves and free people engaged, and others in which there is no evidence of free labour at all. And, fortunately, there are in each of these classes forms of employment about which the evidence, if not complete, is at least fairly precise and intelligible. There is the case of the mining industry on the one hand, as a purely slave occupation ; while, on the other hand, there is building, as an occupation in which slaves and free men work side by side, and prostitution, as an occupation in which slave women and free women were both engaged. Other occupations, such as teaching, shop-keeping, banking, and medicine could be instanced : but about these our evidence is more fragmentary in character.

The best and simplest course will be to take one form of employment out of each of these classes and examine into its conditions in detail. In the absence of fuller evidence they must be regarded as typical cases of chattel-slave and apprentice-slave occupations.

Female employment raises large and difficult questions. I will therefore leave aside the question of prostitution, merely emphasizing the fact that, as Thucydides hints in the Funeral Speech, it was one of the few recognized ways in which a Greek woman could earn a livelihood, and that it was an employment which, as is evident from Plato's catalogue in the *Republic*, occupied a relatively far more prominent position than it occupies to-day. We may mention in passing the story of the career of Rhodopis in Herodotus (ii. 135) and the account of a similar career in Demosthenes' speech against Neaera. In both these cases the women are apprentice-slaves who earn their freedom, and their occupation is described, with the usual Greek directness, as a form of regular employment (*ἐργασία*).

Passing to our other two instances, let us take mining first. There is no need to be lengthy; for the evidence has been admirably put together by Ardaillon both in his book on the Laurion mines, and in an article on Mines in the French dictionary of antiquities; and it has further been well summarized for English readers by

Mr. Paterson. The industry at Laurion (for the greater part of our evidence is about Laurion) consisted of two parts, the extraction of the ore and its carrying, crushing, and grinding above ground. We find cases of free men engaged above ground, but no case is known, and there is no reason for suspecting any, of free labour in the mines themselves. The work was carried on either in shafts and pits or in galleries. Some 2000 shafts and 80-100 miles of galleries have been discovered. The shafts are generally deep, in some cases as deep as 250 feet ; the sides are smooth and almost vertical, with ledges for ladders, and Ardaillon calculates that with two workmen to each shaft, they would be dug out at a rate of 16 feet per month. But most of the work was done in galleries. These galleries were winding, following the vein of the ore, and were kept very narrow, partly to save the trouble of propping, partly to obtain quick results. They are generally 2-3 feet high and 2-3 feet broad. As the galleries were quite dark the miners worked with small clay lamps, for which niches were made in the rock ; these remained alight for ten hours and almost certainly marked the length of the daily shift. It is calculated that a workman could dig out about 12 yards of rock in a month of daily shifts. They worked in chains and almost naked, and were branded with their master's stamp. Ventilation was provided by occasional airshafts. All the

authorities agree that the work went on without interruption night and day.

The numbers employed cannot be fixed with certainty; but since at the present day with modern machinery to keep down the numbers, the district employs some 11,000 men, Ardaillon believes that some 20,000 slaves must have been employed during the most prosperous period in the fifth century. As regards prices, the author of the *De Vectigalibus* calculates that mine-slaves could be bought at 158 drachmae each, and Demosthenes (Speech 37) speaks of a transaction in which mine-slaves fetch 150 drachmae each. This may be accepted as a normal price for the middle of the fourth century, and would be equivalent (making allowance for the rise in prices) to rather over 100 drachmae in the closing quarter of the fifth century. Domestic and other slaves seem to have fetched from 160–200 drachmae during this later period. Mine-slaves, therefore, had a distinctly inferior market value. But all calculations of slave prices, based as they are upon statements which have accidentally come down to us, must be received with great caution, because the slave-market was replenished mainly by warfare and raiding, and the supply of slaves was therefore subject to violent oscillations.

It can be seen from this account how closely ancient mining corresponded to the conditions laid down for a successful system of chattel

slavery. The work is mechanical, unchanging, practically inexhaustible, and entirely unskilled ; the workers are almost stationary in their places and can be chained without interfering with their efficiency ; they work with only the roughest tools and appliances ; the work does not involve disease but is yet sufficiently exhausting to lower the vitality and bring on an early death ; it is carried on in a number of separate pits and galleries underground, under conditions where the amount of work performed can easily be measured and tested, and where the task of supervision is extraordinarily simple and inexpensive. The overseer, generally a trusted apprentice-slave, could probably look after the entire property of a considerable mine-owner or concessionnaire. Above all, it is expended in production of silver, almost the only article for which there can be said to have been an international market and an unlimited demand.

Mining may therefore be taken as the typical industry for the employment of chattel-slaves. Of course it was not the only industry ; we hear of chattel-slaves working in chains at quarrying and building and even, in Roman times, as field-workers and household drudges. But their supervision is always awkward and tends to be dangerous. Sometimes the difficulty is evaded by mutilation and disablement. Roman nobles cut out the tongues of their door porters, and the Scythians blinded the slaves who helped in

the butter-making. But a pastoral community can make little use of male prisoners ; and in a later chapter of the same book Herodotus tells us that the Scythians, even when not cannibals, found the skins and skulls of their captives more useful than their labour.

Let us now pass to a typical apprentice industry, that of building. We know from the historians, above all from the well-known passage in Plutarch's life of Pericles (chapter 12), that building was a free man's industry, and that the big state buildings at Athens were partly undertaken to give the citizens employment. Fortunately we have a number of inscriptions dealing with buildings which provide us with exact details about work and wages.

As I am only using these inscriptions for purposes of illustration, I will briefly summarize their results without stopping to discuss the number of detailed questions which they open up. Most of these moreover have already been well set forth by Francotte. The survival of an inscription or a series of inscriptions is always, from our point of view, a matter of accident ; and we should not be justified in compiling a monograph on the building trade in Attica out of the fragmentary temple-accounts which the archæologists have succeeded in unearthing for our enlightenment. But, with due caution, they may, I think, be used to suggest and to illustrate trains of economic reasoning.

An analysis of the wages bill for the building of the Erechtheum in 409 shows that wages were paid by the State for the work of 27 citizens, 40 metics, and 15 slaves. We are enabled to set side by side with this two other sets of accounts, referring to the building of a sanctuary at Eleusis in the years 329-8 and 319-8. These two sets, when put together, show 36 citizens, 39 resident aliens, 12 strangers, and 2 slaves at work; there are also 57 other names which are too indefinite to be put into any category.

Here, then, we have a clear case of free men and slaves working together at the same trade. Moreover, neither class displaces the other. At the end of three generations the change appears (if we may generalize from these two chance descriptions) to be slightly in favour of the free labourer.

On closer examination several other results emerge.

In the first place the slaves are working not only at the same trade but at identically the same tasks as the free labourers. In the case of the Erechtheum the piece of work paid for is the fluting of the columns. Each column is fluted by a little squad of from four to six workpeople directed by a foreman. All of them, including the foreman, are paid at the same rate. Slaves and free men seem indistinguishably mixed. In one case the foreman is himself a slave; in

another, a master who acts as foreman brings two slaves of his own and another hired from someone else for the occasion. The slaves of course do not receive the wage they earn. They pay it in to their masters, who give them back what they think fit.

In the second place, who are the strangers in the second set of inscriptions? They are not resident aliens, but contract labourers hired for the work in hand. This is a feature which is constantly recurring in our texts. Skilled, and even unskilled, workers have to be imported by communities in order to fill the gaps in their labour supply. So far from there being any chronic unemployment in the Greek City-States, the evidence seems to point to a chronic dearth of workers. For instance, Athens has to send masons and carpenters to Argos when the Argives wish to build long walls, just as Hiram sent skilled labourers to Solomon; and in the inscriptions of Epidaurus we find a regular staff of recruiting agents whose function it is to collect and import the necessary labourers.

One more point, before we attempt to draw any conclusions from these results. Assuming that the apprentice-slave worked as well, or nearly as well, as the free labourer, was apprentice-labour cheaper or more expensive than free labour? Here again inscriptions come to our aid. We have information from Eleusis as to the annual cost of keeping a working slave in

the latter part of the fourth century. The bill works out approximately as follows :

	Drachmae.
Food at 3 obols a day - - -	180
Clothing and incidental expenses -	50
Interest on purchase money (at 12	
per cent.) - - - - -	40
	<hr/> 270

Now the daily wage of a free labourer at this period was a drachma and a half = 540 drachmae a year. Even making allowance for holidays and reckoning in an additional sum for insurance, the discrepancy still remains very considerable. There can be no doubt that apprentice-labour was considerably more profitable to an employer than hired free labour.

Why then did apprentice-labour fail to displace free labour in industries where the two worked side by side? Why, in spite of the sentiment against slave-occupations, in spite of fourth-century theories about the vulgarity of labour and the dignity of leisure, do we find less apprentices building in 329 than in 409?

To deal with this question satisfactorily would carry us very far afield. I can do no more than suggest two tentative explanations.

In the first place apprentice-slavery is not a permanent status. At any given moment there is in the normal City-State a class of apprentices; but it is a class which is constantly being emptied

of its best workers. It is a Danaids' cask. No doubt the economist, with an eye only for normal conditions, must conceive of the cask as being continually replenished. But the historian must take account of the huge obstacles with which all Greek merchants, and especially those who deal in slaves, had to contend. The chances of warfare and raiding, the insecurity of the seas, the oscillations of prices, the difficulty of dealing with local markets in the absence of quick sources of information, the rapid changes in the political conditions of Greek cities and in the purchasing power of their inhabitants, the risk of dealing in so uncertain a commodity as human beings, many of whom, moreover, required a long period of training before they could be satisfactorily disposed of—all these serve to explain why the tide of apprentice-labour never succeeded in sweeping over the whole field of City-State activity. Apprentice-labour in fact was always trying to oust free labour by its superior cheapness; but its best fighters always deserted just at the moment of victory, and it therefore never entirely succeeded, and, in the end, entirely succumbed, in what proved to be an unequal struggle. It is sometimes said that slavery destroyed City-State life. It would be truer to say that City-State life destroyed slavery.

Our second answer has already been suggested by what was said above about the dearth of labour in the Greek cities. If there was no chronic

unemployment, and consequently no competition for employment, among free workers in the Greek City-States, there was also no competition between free workers and apprentices or between the apprentices themselves. There were, as has been said, too few apprentices rather than too many. Apprentice-slaves were in even greater demand than other workers, because their labour was cheaper; but they were even more difficult to procure, because they involved a capital outlay. The effect of their presence, bargaining through their masters, upon wages, in a society where the remuneration of free workers was almost entirely fixed by custom, would be an interesting but intricate study. But here we can do no more than point out that the dearth of labour which their failure reveals applied to all forms of economic activity from the highest to the lowest.

Here then we are brought face to face with larger problems. The question of the introduction of slave-labour cannot be considered apart from the general policy, so unfamiliar in an age of trade-unionism but characteristic of the Greek City-State at a certain point in its development, of encouraging and, where possible, compelling the immigration of foreign craftsmen. We have not to think of apprentices as a peculiar class branded with the brand of Cain and reserved for certain special occupations, but as part of the huge army of intelligent workers, people's workers (*δημιουργοί*), as the Greeks

often called them, who took their share in building up Greek civilization as we know it. Here, as elsewhere, the speculations of the aristocratic philosophers, living, as only a small fraction of Greeks could afford to live, on independent incomes, have led us astray. The great Greek writers, the writers who show us City-State civilization at its highest, from Homer to Thucydides, are safer guides. The Greeks made very little distinction between different branches of intelligent activity and craftsmanship—between theoretical and practical, intellectual and manual, skilled and unskilled, the rendering of services and the production of commodities—between architect and mason, doctor and herbalist, judge and juryman, engineer and navvy, philosopher and elementary teacher. This, of course, is what is meant by saying that City-State life was democratic; but the economic applications of democracy are so unfamiliar to us that we miss their bearings, and are genuinely surprised when the inscriptions show us sculptors and schoolmasters paid at the same rate as day labourers. Everyone who makes a living by his occupation and is not simply a brute or a chattel is a worker, from Arion with his dithyrambs and Thales who used his 'philosophy' to carry an army over a difficult river and make a corner in olive-presses, down to the mixer in a doctor's dispensary or the assistant in a scent-shop on the Agora.

One of the principal objects of a growing City-

State community anxious to raise its standard of civilization was to attract as many as possible of these craftsmen as subjects within its walls. Just as Peter the Great, and a generation ago the Japanese, went westward to attract European teachers, and as the English in the Middle Ages welcomed Flemings and Lombards, so a prosperous Greek community opened its doors to resident aliens and apprentice-slaves. We can trace the whole process in the history of Athens from the early attempts of Solon, through Pisistratus, with his court of foreign poets, soothsayers, and sculptors, through Cleisthenes, who even introduced many 'strangers and alien slaves' into his new tribes, down to Themistocles who gave 'resident aliens and craftsmen' immunity from taxation, and Cimon who sent 20,000 slaves home after the battle of the Eurymedon, and Nicias who in the culminating moment of the Sicilian expedition addresses the aliens in his ranks as 'the only free partakers with us in the Athenian Empire.' As the old Oligarch puts it, with his usual bluntness, 'the city wants aliens, because of the number of crafts and because of the fleet' (which withdraws a number of citizens, he explains, from active work); 'that is why we give the aliens equal rights.' And that, as he tells us a little earlier, is also why the slaves must be treated so gingerly and you are not allowed to knock them down when you feel inclined.

The desire to attract working immigrants is not uncommon among rising states; but in Greece it was carried far further than in the analogous cases which have been quoted. The expedient of introducing apprentice-slaves is almost peculiar to the Greeks and the Romans. No doubt one cause of this is to be found in the special relations existing between the Greeks and the barbarians who lived around them. But leaving these aside, let us close by inquiring to what special causes in the Greek City-State itself this dearth of labour may have been due.

Three main reasons, I think, can be suggested. The first is the poverty of the City-State world. The Greeks created European civilization, with all the desires and refinements and luxuries with which it is bound up. When we look at the Parthenon and the theatre of Dionysus, or read the inventory of the Acropolis treasures, we are apt to forget the relative poverty of the society which created them and the heavy sacrifice which their creation entailed. Greek life is still so shrouded in romance that we are slow to detect the inconsistencies of our imagination. At one moment we marvel at the richness of its achievements; the next we smile contemptuously at its childish simplicity and deride its crude efforts at economic organization and ridiculous ignorance of mechanical processes. But, for good or for evil, 'the Greeks ran their world by hand'; and consequently the natural resources which

they tapped were ludicrously small. Even in Athens, the richest of all the City-States, with a large income from tribute, only 1200 out of some 35,000 citizens could provide their own horses in war time. They were engaged then in an impossible task. They were attempting to meet the needs of a modern civilized community with the help of archaic or mediaeval resources. Their economic organization was not equal to the strain which these new needs placed upon it. They had no efficient arrangements for the productive investment of capital: no system of public credit: no powerful government departments or groups of financiers and contractors for the execution of public or private works. They had not the wealth to pay for what they wanted; and they were too ignorant and too unsystematic to set about the task of creating it. Once this is realized a great deal of what is obscure in Greek history and Greek political and moral thought becomes clear. It explains the brutal materialism of Thucydides and the desperate asceticism of the moralists, Herodotus' touching interest in Croesus and Plato's dying invective against Atlantis. This is not the place to pursue this reflection further. But it will serve to explain the prevailing cult of aggression and its natural satisfaction in almost incessant warfare; and to throw light too on the question of imported craftsmen. For the material resources of civilization require capital and labour.

If capital cannot be procured, or can only be procured with difficulty and injustice, there is all the more need to procure labour ; and when, as in the case of slaves, the labour is also capital, and requires no money payment when procured, the pressure towards slave-dealing or slave-raiding becomes irresistible. Hence all the Greek City-States, when they reached the point at which they became conscious of the material needs of civilization, were eager to hale in workers from outside.

There is a second reason connected with the conditions of ancient craftsmanship. Nowadays industry and industrial processes are cosmopolitan. Given sufficient capital to purchase the raw material and machinery, an industry can be set up anywhere. Labour and capacity will flow to it. Its success or failure will depend on many varying considerations, but want of knowledge will seldom be one of them ; for knowledge, even when protected by patents, is practically cosmopolitan, and like everything else, it can be bought. But the Greek world was a world of trade-secrets and patents ; craftsmanship (whether in poetry or in medicine or in sculpture or in pottery) was handed down as a mystery from generation to generation, and the skilled craftsman always bore with him something of the halo of the wizard. Homer and Asklepios, Daedalus and Hippocrates, Polygnotus and Euphronius each create a school and a tradition ;

and the tradition is jealously guarded till its guardians become almost a caste. 'Glaucus of Chios,' says Herodotus in his naïve way, 'was the only man who found out how to weld iron.' Clearly Glaucus kept the secret to himself.

This explains, of course, the peculiar character of Greek craft guilds, which were not trade-unions or employers' associations in our sense of the word, and indeed did not exist primarily, or rather ostensibly, for economic objects at all. They were religious and social. Ziebarth, who has made a careful study of the mass of the inscriptional evidence relating to them, from the philosophers' schools and associations of actors and musicians down to silversmiths, tanners, fishermen, laundry-men, and municipal slaves, has the hardihood to assert that any permanent association of a group of men merely for purpose of mutual profit was contrary to Greek religious instincts. 'Religious interests were their only durable bond of union.' We have no right to contradict him. But a great deal depends upon the scope and meaning of 'religious interests,' as the story of the silversmiths at Ephesus reminds us.

The Greek world is therefore a world of local specialization,—not specialization in the modern sense of the sub-division of labour (of which there was very little), but specialization in the sense of inherited local craftsmanship and aptitudes. Localities became associated with certain

familiar forms of production, and, in a society swayed by custom rather than by fashion, where the form of an amphora or a tripod remained unchanged for centuries, the tradition of local craftsmanship persisted with astonishing tenacity. Miss Ramsay showed not long ago how the peculiar patterns on the tombstones at Iconium in Asia Minor still survive on the embroideries made by the peasants there at the present day.

Now the object of every Greek city is to be self-sufficient, and one of the boasts of a wealthy and growing city is, as we know from the Funeral Speech, that it is self-sufficient in luxuries as well as in necessities and can provide everything that a civilized man needs for his comfort. No doubt in a sense, in the inverted and ingenious sense in which Thucydides is fond of using political catchwords, a maritime city with a large import-trade is self-sufficient in luxuries. But she will be more self-sufficient still, and certainly far securer, if she harbours the foreign craftsman within her own walls ; and this is certainly what Athens tried her best to do.

In this way, then, the local character of ancient craftsmanship drove states to the policy of promoting the immigration of labour. It will be seen that it mattered little whether the immigrants were free men or slaves, provided they worked willingly and brought their crafts with them. But the historical evidence seems to

show, as we should expect, that the immigration of free craftsmen tended to precede the immigration of slaves. For the wave of immigration began in most parts of Greece under the auspices of the tyrants ; and the tyrants had political reasons for preaching the dignity of free labour and not too much leisure for politics.

This will serve to introduce our third and concluding point, which raises the disputed question of the attitude of the Greeks towards manual labour and the dignity of leisure. There can be no doubt that City-State democracy necessitated an amount of free time and public spirit incompatible with the demands of modern industrial life. The modern man who is engaged in earning his livelihood puts his citizenship into odd half-hours and is a wage-earner or a family man for the rest of the day. Not so the Greek, or the Mediterranean man under any form of civilization. He is less of a family man, for he lives mainly out of doors and goes home only to sleep and perhaps to eat. And he is less of a worker, for he objects (and the climate sustains his objection) to any form of monotonous concentrated labour, particularly when it involves remaining indoors and in a constrained and awkward posture. This is what is meant by the Greek prejudice against 'menial work.' There is no more typical Greek than Xenophon, and this is how he puts this matter : 'The so-called menial occupations are despised ; and it is quite

right that cities should rate them low. For they murder the bodies of those who work at them and spend their time on them, by compelling them to remain indoors and sedentary and sometimes even to spend all day by the fire.' And the testimony of Xenophon is borne out by the most probable derivation of the word *βαναυσία* which connects it with work done by the fire. Its meaning has been obscured by the philosophers, who took a current prejudice, widened its range and transformed its meaning, till almost every method of earning a livelihood from teaching philosophy downwards ceased to be respectable, and no forms of activity remained worthy of a civilized being beyond contemplation and politics and fighting.

We can see the effects of this Greek objection to monotonous indoor activity in almost every department of City-State life : in their philosophy, which dispensed with books and aired itself in the market-place but never succeeded in organizing knowledge or building up any great scientific tradition ; in their astonishing success in building and sculpture and their failure to develop beyond the simplest mechanical inventions ; above all in their desire to spend their own time in their own way. The Greeks never took kindly to wage-earning : and a society like ours, where nearly every one is living under a contract, would be incomprehensible to their imaginations.

Under these circumstances how did they get the material work of their civilization done? Much of it, as has been said, did *not* get done. Societies which dislike irksome work must be content to live in a slovenly manner. There are regions of Greek life into which it is wiser not to penetrate; but the curious reader cannot forget that what Dionysius of Halicarnassos (and other Greeks before him) thought the three things most worthy of admiration in Rome were the water supply, the street paving, and the sewers. There were no wells in the Piraeus before the great plague; and even Pericles, who foresaw everything, is admitted by Thucydides to have overlooked the necessities of public health.

But if the work was to be done, it could be done in two ways. There was the method of the 'call to work' and the method of imported labour. When the work was urgent the whole population could be called out, like an English village during the hay-making, to help in getting it done. That is how the walls of Athens were built in 478 and the walls of Argos in 417, women, children and slaves helping in the work. A better instance still is given us in Herodotus. The whole population of Cnidos turns out to wall off the Isthmus which separated the town from the mainland. 'And as they worked in a great body the workers appeared to them to be subject to unreasonable and possibly heaven-sent injuries in every part of their body and particularly in their eyes, owing

to the splitting of the stone. So they sent messages to Delphi and asked what was hindering them. And the Pythia (so at least the Cnicians say), replied to them in iambics as follows: "Do not fortify your isthmus, nor go on digging. For Zeus would have made it an island had he wished it." ' So the Cnicians ceased building and surrendered to the Persians without a struggle. This story illustrates better than any accumulation of further evidence why the Greeks desired outsiders, if possible, to help them to perform some of the more unpleasant forms of labour. It explains why a Greek would rather starve than work in a mine, and why there are thus certain forms of employment which were monopolized, or almost monopolized, by slaves, freedmen, and metics. In a broad sense it is true to say that citizenship and wage-earning were incompatible, and that apprentices, freedmen, and metics were the wage-earners of the City-State world. For it must be remembered that all these three classes were normally debarred from owning land and were therefore deliberately shut out from what was the main employment and industry of the City-State world.

We have thus come, by a long and circuitous road, within view of the answer to the question from which we started. Greek society was not a slave-society; but it contained a sediment of slaves to perform its most degrading tasks, while the main body of its so-called slaves consisted of

apprentices haled in from outside to assist, together and almost on equal terms with their masters, in creating the material basis of a civilization in which they were hereafter to share.

APPENDIX

I append two typical manumission inscriptions from Dittenberger's collection :

Delphi, 178-7 B.C. (Dittenberger, No. 848.)

During the magistracy of Praxias at Delphi, in the month of Apellaios, Asandros, son of Menandros of Beroea, dedicates to the care of the Pythian Apollo, to be free, Euporia, his maidservant, on payment of 200 Alexandrian drachmae. She is to escort Asandros back to Macedonia and so be free. Witnesses : Menandros, son of Euphronios, Amyntas, son of Latos, Paramonos, son of Kallistratos.

Delphi, 170-157 B.C. (Dittenberger, No. 858.)

During the magistracy of Menestratos in Delphi, in the month of Amalios, when Euthudamos was in the sixth month of his Presidency of the Games among the Locrians at Physcos, Kallixenos, son of Euarchides of Myonia, sold to Apollo a male (*σῶμα ἀνδρεῖον*) named Sosos, by race a Gaul, at a price of six minae of silver, on the terms on which Sosos entrusted the purchase to the god, on condition that he should be free and inviolate from the hands of all men for all his life, doing what he would and escaping to whom he would. Sureties according to the deed : Emmenides, son of Dexicrates of Delphi, Polykritos, son of Kallixenos of Myonia. And if any man enslave

Sosos let the seller Kallixenos and the sureties testify to the god's purchase ; and if they fail to do so let them be fined according to the deed. And in the same way let all who happen to be by be at liberty to seize upon his person as a freeman (*συλέοντες ὡς ἐλεύθερον ὄντα*) and go unpunished, subject to no trial or penalty. And Sosos is to pay back the share-money (*ἐράνον*) of forty minae which Amyneas, son of Charixenos, collected, half of it standing in Kallixenos' name, until the whole share-money be paid out, and thus the purchase of the god be completed. And if he do not pay it back, Sosos and all his goods are to be liable to seizure by Kallixenos. And if Sosos die childless, all that he leaves is to fall to Kallixenos ; and if Sosos give anything to anyone in gift during his life-time, the purchase is to be null and void. And Sosos is to complete all the orders (*ἔργα*) of Kallixenos, until the share capital is paid back. And if Sosos do not complete the orders as has been prescribed above, the purchase shall be null and void, unless Sosos fall ill. And Sosos is to train a craftsman for Kallixenos, if Kallixenos hand over the apprentice (*Παιδάριον*) to Sosos. The purchase (took place) in the presence of Archon, son of Kallias, of Delphi and Erymandros, son of Kritodamos, Locrian of Myonia. Witnesses : Amyntas, Priest of Apollo, Theoxenos, Archon, and the following private citizens : Archon, son of Kallias, Mantias, son of Demochares, Archelas, son of Demosthenes, Archon, son of Nikobulos, Delphians : Aleximachos, son of Damatimos, Damon, son of Theudoros, Amphissons.

VI

SUGGESTIONS TOWARDS A POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE GREEK CITY-STATE

STUDENTS of the history of Graeco-Roman civilization have been slow in assimilating the methods of workers in other fields of historical and social inquiry. For a long time after the revival of interest in classical studies at the Renaissance, it was upon literature and art that attention was chiefly fixed, and these were studied almost without any reference to their historical background. Even when it became evident that literature and art could not be satisfactorily studied apart from the social and political conditions out of which they arose, ancient history was slow to disengage itself as a separate and independent subject. Scholars tended to regard it as merely ancillary to the study of literature, and it was relegated too often to the footnotes of editions of classical authors. In many quarters it is still so regarded, and a student of ancient history is thought of rather as a classical scholar in a particular branch of *Altertumswissenschaft* than as a worker in the

same field and faculty as historians of more recent times.

Yet as early as 1817 August Boeckh had realized, in one department of ancient history, the shortcomings of this narrowing tradition, and his book on the Public Economy of Athens marks the first milestone on a road to which ancient historians are now definitely committed. Antiquity is not a golden age about which anything may be believed because its conditions are so remote from our own; but a subject of historical study to be investigated by precisely the same methods and in the same spirit of dispassionate curiosity as modern ages. And as within the last century, and more particularly during the last generation, the study of political economy with its quest of economic causes has invaded the field of modern history, it must be allowed to run its course in ancient history also.

And so economic arguments and economic assumptions have crept almost unconsciously into our books on ancient history and our interpretations of classical authors. Of late years indeed there has been a perfect riot of economic argumentation, more particularly on the part of the historians of Athens. All the vocabulary of the modern economic historian—capitalism, markets, imported labour, unemployment, the pressure of population upon subsistence—has made its appearance in their pages. The 'real' reason why the Athenians undertook the Pelo-

ponnesian War has formed a particularly fruitful field of speculation. One theory is that they hoped to crush their trade-rivals in Western markets; another that they hoped to crush the power of the Spartans by intercepting their imported food supply; a third that they were driven to expansion by the need for bullion or tribute to pay for their imports of luxuries; a fourth that the real motive-power was supplied by the soldiers and sailors who desired war for the pay and profits which it ensured to them. These theories are very interesting and some or all of them may eventually turn out to be true. My object in stating them is to emphasize the fact that in the present state of our knowledge they must remain what the reviewers always call them, 'brilliant conjectures,' defying alike effective criticism or confirmation.

For, though economics has entered into our conception of ancient history, it has entered in as a step-child, and no proper place has yet been made for it. It is useless to argue about a theory until we are in a position to define the terms in which it is expressed. This has never yet been done for the economics of antiquity.

Before we settle our disputes about the commercial policy of Athens or the effect of the slave-trade upon the Athenian working classes, we need some working hypothesis as to the general economic conditions of the ancient world.

This need has long been felt ; and various attempts have been made to supply it. Some writers have hoped to meet it by what I would call descriptive methods, by the collection, enumeration and labelling of separate economic facts. Thus we are told by the numismatists that we must make no general statements about Greek trade till we have collected all the available evidence about coin-standards ; and that it is only when the coin-standards of two City-States agree well together and facilitate business that we are justified in assuming a large degree of commercial intercourse. No doubt there is much valuable material to be gathered in this field ; but the method is not only very lengthy, but also very precarious. For it depends, in the first place, upon the accidental survival of coins, and there are almost certain to be irreparable gaps in the chain of evidence. And secondly, it assumes a hypothesis which it is quite impossible to verify—that cities either habitually or generally altered their coin-standards to suit their commercial customers. So many other considerations, religious as well as political, enter into questions of ancient coinage, that this hypothesis must be regarded as at best rather hazardous. And other applications of purely descriptive or enumerative methods will almost inevitably be found to suffer from the same defects ; for they all start by assuming some principle of selection.

Another method of meeting the difficulty has been adopted by the historical school of economists represented by writers like Rodbertus and Bücher. According to these writers (who derive their inspiration largely from Hegel), there has been a general law of economic as there has been of historical progress. History may therefore be divided up into compartments, each marking a certain stage of economic advance. In this way the Middle Ages, with feudalism and serfdom, precede the modern age of capitalism and wage-labour, and antiquity precedes the Middle Ages. Antiquity therefore presents the features of an early stage of economic development. The most marked of these features are slavery and a narrow range of production and distribution. Rodbertus indeed almost went so far as to deny that international trade existed in antiquity at all, and coined the word *Oikenwirtschaft*, 'House-economy,' to denote the most distinctive feature of ancient economic life, his theory being that the normal ancient man was a member of a household (including slaves) which was practically self-sufficient, growing its own food, making its own clothing, and living practically without economic intercourse with its neighbours.

That this theory should ever have been seriously held is a remarkable illustration of the dangers of specialism. Rodbertus was, of course, not a historian but an economist; but any

historical student could have quoted him half-a-dozen passages from memory which would have disposed of his theory. It has, of course, long since joined the company of its fellows in the limbo of professorial hypotheses. Nobody now (outside the doctrinaire Socialist movement) believes in a general law of economic progress, or in the necessary advance of economic man from slavery through serfdom to wage-labour and yet higher spheres of economic freedom. Yet the theory did good service in its day ; for it focussed men's minds on the fact that what we need to discover is not merely the separate details of the economic organization of antiquity, but the general conditions underlying it, the general economic background.

The writer who did more than anyone else to dispose of Rodbertus and Bücher was Eduard Meyer, in his two pamphlets on the *Economic Development of the Ancient World* and on *Ancient Slavery*. But he appears to have fallen from one extreme into the other. If Rodbertus thought of ancient life as more primitive and chaotic than that of the Middle Ages, Meyer on the other hand assimilates it to the highly organized activity of modern capitalist and competitive societies. It is true that he eschews any cut-and-dry law of development ; but he goes so far as to suggest that the old scheme of progress from slavery through serfdom to wage-labour should rather be cut into two parts, and

Graeco-Roman history regarded as a cycle complete in itself, beginning with the pastoral life of the early Greek communities, approaching in the hey-day of Athens and Rome to the fully developed organization of modern life, and relapsing into primitive conditions with the Colonnade and the return to serfdom at the break up of the Western Roman Empire. This is a fine and suggestive historical vista, but it is not convincing. On the one hand it is suspiciously neat and clean-cut ; and on the other its author constantly uses modern terms, such as capitalism or competition, or distant markets, which he makes no attempt to define. Yet a moment's reflection convinces the reader that he has no right to use them in their modern meaning for a world ignorant of modern methods of travel and communication.

In what way then shall we attempt to meet the need for this general economic background ? I venture to suggest that the best way of doing so is also the most natural way, by adapting to our use the methods of theoretical political economy. It is surely surprising that this has never yet been attempted. During the last century theoretical economists have been slowly building up an imposing edifice of what is claimed to be scientific knowledge about the economic life of men and nations. Surely the natural course for a student in search of the general economic laws governing ancient life would be

to consult Mill and Marshall (to mention only English names) for the general economic laws governing all social life, and from this proceed to more special and detailed applications.

In other words the book we need is a political economy of antiquity, embodying the universal scientific conclusions of the theoretical economists and applying them to the interpretation of ancient life. Whether this would need one book or several, whether Graeco-Roman history is sufficiently homogeneous over its whole course to form the subject of a single treatise is a separate question which will be touched on later. But I am quite certain that till we get such a book or books from a scholar who is at once a first-rate historian and a first-rate theoretical economist we shall go on wandering in the dark; and I also feel convinced that a writer who made such a book his object would find an immense amount of helpful material ready to hand in the life of some of the more secluded Mediterranean communities at the present time.

Why has not this method been followed hitherto? The reason is given, I think, in an interesting essay by Walter Bagehot in his *Economic Studies in the Postulates of Political Economy*. He points out that Adam Smith and his followers never properly made clear the real scope of the different branches of their study. They assumed too readily that what was true, and

could be verified, of a nineteenth-century man in Western Europe was true of all men in all times and places. Consequently they tended to express their theory in too abstract and dogmatic a form, and were rather shy of drawing illustrations from any particular field of experience. Thus they alienated the interest, not only of professed historical students, but also of the general reading public and of practical men. The truth is that the body of economic doctrine as set forth in the treatises of the ordinary theoretical economists really consists of two disparate and separable parts. Some of it holds good of to-day only : some of it is valid *semper et ubique*. Some of it is only true of advanced business communities with large firms and all the apparatus of modern credit. Some of it is true of nature and man in all ages and in every civilization. If we are to apply economics to history, it is most necessary to disentangle the two, and it is little to the credit of historians, not only ancient but mediaeval and modern, that they have not systematically attempted to do so. Professor Ashley, for instance, in the preface to his *Economic History of England* pours mild scorn on the orthodox economists because the conclusions they deduce are only hypothetical—only true, that is, so far as their assumptions are true. He proposes therefore to ‘ free his mind at the outset of all a priori theories and to see things as they are and have been.’ This is talking like a day

labourer who should propose to throw away his tools because he finds that every now and then they serve him less well than his fingers. I only quote this because it is a good instance of the way in which historians and scientific economists have lost touch with one another. Would not the historians be better employed in inquiring which of their colleague's hypothetical assumptions are true for their period and which are not? They would find that a sufficient number of them emerge successfully from the ordeal to provide them with a good deal of working material.

Economics is, of course, only one department of social science, of the vast and heterogeneous domain which goes by the name of Sociology. Its conclusions therefore, even when narrowed down to generalizations about a single period or a single community, are only hypothetical: they will always be liable to interruption by some cause working outside its own sphere. But science only advances by subdivision; and to refuse to apply economics to Greek history because economic activity was only one side of Greek life would be like refusing to admit that meteorological laws were valid for Sheffield because it is difficult to discern the sky there. Where these interrupting causes are constantly present the work of economics or meteorological speculation is no doubt rendered considerably more difficult. But this does not make it one whit the less necessary.

Economics shares with geography a peculiar position among the social sciences because it is partly concerned with external nature and partly with man. On the one hand, therefore, it has affinities with chemistry and physics and physical geography, and on the other with the whole range of anthropological inquiry, which aims at discovering general truths about the actions of mankind.

In so far as it deals with external nature, its conclusions have been established on a scientific basis and will never be upset. As I am not writing a treatise on economics I will content myself with two illustrations. The first is the law of diminishing returns in agriculture, which Marshall states in these words: '*An increase in the capital and labour applied in the cultivation of land causes in general a less than proportionate increase in the amount of produce raised*'; he adds (but here he is suggesting an interruption from outside), 'unless it happens to coincide with an improvement in the arts of agriculture.' This holds good in all ages among all people, and stands as firm as the law of gravitation. As I have taken my first instance from agriculture I will take my second from trade. In a footnote to his section on the carrying trade Marshall remarks, 'A ship's carrying power varies as the cube of her dimensions, while the resistance offered by the water increases only a little faster than the square of her dimensions'; and from this

he concludes that *ceteris permittentibus* (given harbours that big ships can enter and goods enough for them to carry) big ships enjoy a natural economic advantage over small ones. To tamper with this conclusion is again to tamper with the laws of Nature.

It is when economics comes to deal with man that its application to distant ages becomes difficult and controversial. It is a difficulty which recurs in all the human sciences, which are bound by their very nature to attempt the impossible, to reduce to some fixed order and tendency the *varium et mutabile* of human nature. But as it has been attempted in the spheres of politics and strategy and law and even of art and religion, it seems rather belated to sneer at attempts to frame generalizations about economic human nature also. The main difficulty here as elsewhere is to distinguish between what is permanent and what is transitory, between what Marshall neatly calls the strategy and the tactics of economic life. I cannot do better than quote his own words in his Appendix on the Scope and Method of Economics: 'Corresponding to tactics are those outward forms and accidents of economic organization which depend on temporary or local aptitudes, customs and relations of classes; on the influence of individuals; or on the changing appliances and needs of production. While to strategy corresponds that more fundamental substance of

economic organization, which depends mainly on such wants and activities, such preferences and aversions, as are found in man everywhere: they are not indeed always the same in form, nor quite even the same in substance; but yet they have a sufficient element of permanence and universality to enable them to be brought in some measure under general statements, whereby the experiences of one time and one age may throw light on the difficulties of another.' Or as the same author says in the first paragraph of his book, political economy or economics is a study of mankind in the ordinary business of life. In other words, man as the subject of economics is not an abstract imaginary being with one single ruling motive and activity (like the subject of a volume on skating or mountaineering who is a skater or a mountaineer and nothing more), but the concrete human being of ordinary life, the gregarious political animal with whom we have been familiar since Aristotle. Only in order that he may be satisfactorily observed, and generalizations framed about his behaviour, he must be put, as it were, in a strait waistcoat and somewhat regularized in his activities. He is indeed a great deal more versatile and concrete than the imaginary object of popular sarcasm who (to quote Marshall again) 'is under no ethical influences, but pursues pecuniary gain warily and energetically, but mechanically and

selfishly.' The man of economic science is as close to actual life as the exigencies of science permit, and what science above all demands is a certain measure of regularity. To quote Marshall again: 'Normal' (economic) 'action is taken to be that which may be expected, under certain conditions, from the members of an industrial (I should prefer to say social) group; and *no attempt is made to exclude the influence of any motives the action of which is regular.*'

Why then has economics been accused of concerning itself with an imaginary being occupied solely with the acquisition of wealth? Because the simplest and most searching way of finding out about economic human nature is to do so in terms of money. Men are active in many different ways and work from many different motives; but from the nature of human life and human need, these activities and motives tend to express themselves in all but very primitive communities in terms of money. 'The steadiest motive to ordinary business work is the desire for the pay which is the material reward of work; . . . and it is this definite and exact money measurement of the steadiest motives in business life which has enabled economics to far to outrun every other branch of the study of man' (p. 14).

'Just as the chemist's fine balance has made chemistry more exact than most other physical sciences; so this economist's balance, rough and

imperfect as it is, has made economics more exact than any other branch of social science.' To it we owe the fact that while the other human sciences are still groping in the dark, bandying clumsy phrases about forces which it seems impossible to reduce to scientific form, economics has emerged into clear daylight with exact and scientifically formulated results. In politics, for instance, every difference seems a difference of quality; this man applauds the advantages of democracy: that man deplores its shortcomings. Aristotle taught men to look for a best form of government and men have been groping after it ever since. But in economics everything is a question, not of quality, but of degree. If the advantages and shortcomings of democracy at any particular moment could be weighed in this fine balance and expressed in terms of number, we should not yet have discovered, it is true, what is the best form of government, but mankind would have been saved a deal of tedious talk.

But it is only an accident due to the exigencies of scientific classification that economics is so largely concerned with money; just as it is only an accident that archaeology and anthropology are so largely concerned with skulls and pins and potsherds and other nicknacks. As Marshall observes (p. 782), 'It is quite possible that there may be worlds in which no one ever heard of private property in material things or wealth as it is generally understood. . . . In such a

world there may be a treatise on economic theory very similar to the present even though there be little mention in it of material things and no mention at all of money . . . the only conditions required in a measure for economic purposes are that it should be definite and transferable. Its taking a material form is practically convenient but is not essential.' So that it is conceivable that treatises on economics might be written both about primitive communities where economic motive is measured in terms of oxen or caldrons (as in Homer), and about advanced communities like Mr. Wells' Utopia where it is measured by units of energy.

It is conceivable, but it would not be easy, particularly in the case of the oxen and the caldrons. For, unlike money, oxen and caldrons are not a really convenient means (I am quoting Marshall again, p. 22) of measuring human motive on a large scale. Gold and silver tend to grow up beside oxen and caldrons, and ultimately to supplant them for purposes of trade. Yet money never attained, in the ancient world, to nearly so predominant a place as it holds to-day, because trade itself did not attain to so predominant a place. And this introduces a grave difficulty about the application of modern economic method to antiquity: for in the ancient world men did not so habitually and constantly measure human motive in money as we do. 'In a primitive community each family

is nearly self-sufficing and provides most of its own food and clothing and even household furniture. Only a very small part of the income or comings in of the family are in the form of money ; and this remains partly true of Graeco-Roman society even at its highest point of development (except in the big capitals) ; for Graeco-Roman society was always predominantly and fundamentally agricultural in character ; and its agriculture was agriculture for consumption rather than for sale.' At this point of his work Marshall has a characteristic note. ' This and similar facts ' (about the absence of money in a primitive community) ' have led some people to suppose not only that some parts of the modern analysis of distribution and exchange are inapplicable to a primitive community ; which is true : but also that there are no important parts of it that are applicable ; which is not true.' This is sound doctrine : but it is no good shirking the difficulty that in the absence of money as a measure of motive it is very hard to make the application because it is *very hard to discover the facts*. And it is for this reason—because of the relative insignificance of trade as compared with agriculture, and the comparatively large amount of wealth which was never expressed at all in terms of money—that political economy when applied to antiquity will never attain (and could never attain, even if our documentary evidence were as complete

as we could wish it) results as precise and accurate as when applied to present-day conditions. We must be content with half-lights, with a blurred outline and approximate results. But even these are better than brilliant conjectures and adventurous guesses.

There is another difficulty which constantly besets anyone who is trying to think out the economics of antiquity and which should be briefly mentioned here—the instability of ancient life. Economics studies the effects which will be produced by certain causes, ‘subject to the condition . . . that the causes are able to work out their effects undisturbed.’ Now, as Marshall observes, ‘the condition that time must be allowed for causes to work out their effects is a source of great difficulty in economics. For meanwhile the material on which they work, and perhaps even the causes themselves, may have changed; and the tendencies which are being described will not have a sufficiently “long run” in which to work themselves out fully.’ This ‘long run’ is a peculiar difficulty in ancient economics, for ancient life, at any rate in the Greek City-States, was subject to constant and incalculable vicissitudes. Greek life was indeed stabler than ours, in the sense that it was less varied and more monotonous. The number of possible things men could do or suffer, the gamut of possible change, was very much smaller. But there is order in our disorder; there is regularity

in our versatility. City-State life was unstable because peace could never be assured from one fighting season to the next. War was a normal incident in Greek life, a normal factor in Greek social economy. Now war is the abhorred of economists, not because it is immoral (economists are callous enough on occasion), but because it interferes with the 'long run,' upsets prices, destroys wealth, and muddies the smoothly flowing waters of social life. You may search Marshall's great volume through without finding war mentioned. It is not mentioned because it is the chief enemy of his science—the adversary who sows tares among his wheat and makes havoc of his harvest.

With these reservations and cautions let us come to closer grips with the subject. A question that faces us at the outset is as to the range which our theories are to cover. Within what limits of time should the writer of a political economy of antiquity confine his subject? Shall he attempt to discover tendencies which are true of Graeco-Roman life as a whole, or should one subject be dealt with in several works, each treating a separate period of history?

There is a great deal to be said for the former method. There are many respects in which the economic conditions of Graeco-Roman civilization as a whole, extending, in Professor Mackail's striking phrase, 'from the sack of Cnosos to the sack of Constantinople,' are sharply opposed

to those of the civilized world to-day, which is living and dying (at compound interest) on the legacy of the Industrial Revolution. But the economics of so vast a period, though they might indeed form the subject of a suggestive essay, would in the present chaotic condition of the evidence be too large and difficult a study for any systematic treatise. Clearly it is necessary to narrow the field. The first big boundary, cutting out a portion of the field, which suggests itself, is the consolidation of the Roman Empire under Augustus. When Augustus closed the doors of the temple of Janus and promulgated his famous decree fixing the boundaries of the Empire, he was marking an economic as well as a political epoch. Ever since the communities on the shores of the Mediterranean had begun to develop a civilization of their own they had drawn part of their wealth from outside their own area. Through war, or piracy, or a commerce that was a blend of both there had been a constant flow of wealth, principally, but not wholly, in slaves and metals, from the hinterland to the coast. Thus over the course of many centuries the Mediterranean world consumed more than it produced. It had grown used to a civilization on the Micawber basis, for the missing elements of wealth always 'turned up' from outside. But this process could not go on for ever. Gradually the area of country which still remained to be despoiled with comparative im-

punity grew smaller and smaller ; and the policy of Augustus marks its final disappearance. The Graeco-Roman world had now to supply its own needs and pay for its own indulgences ; and so far from preying on its neighbours it soon had to spend considerable resources in protecting itself against them. What effects this redressing of the balance exercised upon Graeco-Roman civilization it would require long study to demonstrate ; if they were subtle and imperceptible, they must also have been very deep and far-reaching. Possibly they worked as a powerful contributing cause of that general moral and economic stagnation which set in, from no visible and easily ascertainable cause, in the second and third centuries of the Christian era. But such speculations carry us too far afield. They are only introduced to explain why it seems difficult or indeed impossible to bring the Roman Empire within the scope of any general economic theories framed about the earlier centuries of Graeco-Roman civilization.

We are left with that civilization from the sack of Cnosos to the accession of Augustus. I would propose, for the purposes of this sketch, still further to limit the field at both ends. First I would withdraw from consideration what is generally called the Hellenistic period—the period extending from the death of Alexander to the accession of Augustus. I extend the name Hellenistic over the whole period partly because

the most long-lived of the Hellenistic Monarchies, that of the Ptolemies, actually extended over the whole of the period, partly because the influence of Hellenistic ideas and methods of government in the later history of the Roman Republic is now beginning to be generally appreciated. But there is another and even better reason on the economic side. The Hellenistic period, whether it is Rome or the separate Kingdoms of the Diadochi which control communications and police the seas, is a period of national economic organization. It is comparable, though only very roughly comparable—for the powers of organization at its command were very much weaker—with the period of modern history which opened at the Renaissance, when the Kingdoms of Western Europe stand out as consolidated economic units. It is a period which offers a fascinating field for the political economist; for it is almost virgin soil. It appears to be still an entirely open question whether economic forces advanced or receded during its course, whether, for instance, Asia Minor was wealthier or poorer, better organized or worse organized, during the third and second centuries B.C. than during the fifth and fourth. Wilamowitz boldly asserts that the Pergamene Monarchy reached the high-water mark of economic life in antiquity. A more recent German writer, in general agreement with Pöhlmann, asserts the exact opposite, comparing the

Greeks when liberated from the economic fetters of the Polis to a captive emerging from prison too much enfeebled by long confinement to be able to make use of his freedom. I only mention these contradictions in order to illustrate how here, as elsewhere, we are still in the region of brilliant conjecture.

Next I would withdraw from our scope, for more obvious reasons, the whole of the earlier stage of Graeco-Roman civilization, from the sack of Cnosos to the time when a money currency came into general use among the Mediterranean communities. It is, as has been said, theoretically possible to write a book on Homeric economics; but it is not, I think, practically possible; and it is quite certainly impossible to combine caldron economy and money economy in the same treatise.

For our purposes, then, Graeco-Roman civilization begins at the time when money came into general use, not merely as a measure of value (which may have been a good deal earlier than we suspect), but as a means of exchange. If we are to believe Professor Ashley, coins were used as a common measure of value in England as early as the reign of King Offa, in the second half of the eighth century. Yet it was not till several centuries later, certainly after the Norman Conquest, that coins became a trustworthy medium of exchange, and the first attempt at a uniform coinage between England and the

Continent was only made, in concert with some of the Flemish towns, by Edward I. in 1345-6. To confine our attention solely to the period when money was in general use is to exclude from consideration most of what Meyer has taught us to think of as the Mediaeval Age of Greek History, when the inhabitants of Greece Proper lived predominantly in unwalled villages, and there was practically no intercourse between valley and valley. What we are concerned with is a period, or rather a condition of things (for the period is different in different places), which puts the Polis, the walled city, in the centre of the economic organization.

With the characteristics of this period or condition of things, this is not the place to deal. But one point may be emphasized in passing. As regards economic organization, the Polis is a half-way house between the unwalled village that preceded it and the territorial monarchy that followed it. Whether the most prosperous City-States were actually wealthier than the capitals of some of the territorial monarchies may still be an open question. There can be no doubt that in a large sense their economic organization was more rudimentary, just as the organization of the wealthy republics of Venice and Genoa was more rudimentary than that of the modern Italian Kingdom. The City-State marks an intermediate stage of economic organization, a stage of latent possibilities and half-

fledged powers, or in the words of M. Francotte (who has seen and expressed this point more clearly than any other writer I know), it is 'a society which is tending to disengage itself from the primitive organization.' To use a current phrase, which seems to me to have a special applicability, in the modern world the material resources of countries are 'opened up' to civilization: in a primitive community they are not opened up at all: in a City-State community they are half opened up, but there are certain fixed limits beyond which the process cannot be carried. The student of City-State economics is constantly being reminded of these barriers, against which the economic man of the City-State dashes himself in vain. They give a sense of incompleteness, of raggedness to the whole subject. And I think that some of the more profound of the Greek writers, Thucydides, Polybius and Plato, were dimly conscious of this themselves.

I pass to another question, which I have been carefully evading hitherto. Having fixed the period and condition of things with which our economist is to deal, what shall we say on the question of place? We have decided that he is to exclude from his scope the primitive communities of the hinterland whose material resources are still entirely or almost entirely closed to civilization. But apart from this reservation is he to include in his survey all the

City-State communities in the Mediterranean basin which shared in what for want of a better name must be called Graeco-Roman civilization? This would include not only the communities of Greece Proper and Asia Minor, but also the City-States on the Black Sea coast, in Sicily, South Italy, the Riviera, Provence, and the East coast of Spain, as well as isolated communities along the coasts of North Africa, Syria, Cilicia, Lycia and Cyprus.

It is quite possible that these might be satisfactorily included in our treatise, for they must all have had a very similar economic life and organization. But where the subject is in itself so vague and difficult it is wiser to be as precise as possible. It will be better then to confine it to the City-States of Greece Proper and Asia Minor, using other Greek communities, such as those of Sicily, Magna Graecia and North Africa, merely for purposes of illustration and ignoring non-Hellenic communities, whether Italian, Semitic or Asiatic, altogether. This has the advantage of providing us with a definite geographical background, the Balkan peninsula and the basin of the Aegean.

Even when thus curtailed our survey will include a fairly wide subject—the City-States in Greece Proper and Asia Minor over a period extending from the time when money was first used as a common medium of exchange in the eighth or early in the seventh century to

the conquests of Alexander at the end of the fourth.

But we are not yet in a position to bring the theoretical economists upon the scene. We must first put them in possession of the natural and social conditions which they will be called upon to face. In other words, we need both a historical and a geographical background. Every economic essay or treatise ought to be preceded by some general account of the men and country with which it deals. The only reason why we do not find this in the books of Mill and Marshall and other general treatises is that, dealing as they do predominantly with the present day and with familiar places, they take our knowledge of historical and geographical conditions for granted. The economist of antiquity can allow himself no such liberty. He must begin by assimilating and briefly setting forth the main results of scientific geographical inquiry over his area. This is not so difficult a task as it sounds, for there have been many workers in the field, though the economic significance of their results has not been sufficiently appreciated. I need only mention the work of Neumann and Partsch as long ago as 1876, and the more recent volumes of Phillipson. I have no intention of trying to summarize their results. I will only select two instances to show the kind of influence geography may exercise upon the economics of the Aegean area,

one from the land and the other from the sea.

For the land I will take the familiar fact that the soil of the Mediterranean area is exposed to far stronger mechanical and far weaker chemical action than the soil of Northern Europe. Owing to the absence of permanent moisture, soil is only formed over the bare rock with great difficulty, and is far more easily carried away by storms and rivers, till, as Plato says in the *Critias*, only the bones are left. Hence all vegetation in the Mediterranean area is uphill work. This is a fact which has very important economic bearings ; it means, for instance, that when a district has been for a few years neglected it will require far greater toil and expense to put it again under cultivation than in the Northern countries where the theoretical economists for the most part live. This explains a large part of the economics of ancient warfare. Summer campaigning, with devastation of the crops, did little harm ; but a permanent occupation, which neglected the fields and the water-channels, might be well-nigh irreparable. A modern poet, apostrophizing mother Earth on the field of Waterloo, can say without fear of contradiction :

The gay young generations mask her grief :
Where bled her children hangs the loaded sheaf :
Forgetful is green earth. The gods alone
Remember everlastingly.

But, for the Greeks, Earth too is a Goddess and

a Goddess who, far from being forgetful, may remember for generations.

I need hardly point out the bearings of this simple geographical fact on the history of the earlier and later phases of the Peloponnesian War. Attica (as the new fragment of Theopompus is now here to confirm) suffered comparatively little from the early invasions ; but the occupation of Decelea was a disaster from which she never recovered.

For the sea I would take the fact that the Mediterranean has no tides, but very strong and treacherous currents. The effect of its tidelessness upon the use of harbours and landing-places is obvious ; what is not so obvious is the effect of currents in giving peculiar advantages to local knowledge and seamanship, and almost entirely closing certain routes to maritime traffic. Bérard's famous 'law of the Isthmus' (which, however, needs restating in a more careful form) is a good instance of an economic generalization built up upon a knowledge of geographical conditions.

One further and very important point before I pass from geography to history. The City-States with which we shall be dealing, whether their capitals are actually seaports or not, are essentially maritime states. In Greece Proper and Asia Minor there is hardly a community that is out of touch with the sea ; as Cicero says in the *De Republica* (quoting Dicaearchus, as he has

the candour to tell Atticus), 'the Peloponnese is almost entirely maritime in character, Phlius being the only state whose territory does not touch the sea' (I do not know what has become of Arcadia); 'while outside the Peloponnese the Aenianes, Dorians and Pelopes are the only inland peoples. And as to the Greek islands, why the sea is so much all round them and a part of them that they almost seem to be themselves afloat, institutions, customs and all.' The same is true, as Cicero goes on to say, of the Greek communities oversea, whether in Asia Minor or elsewhere. Why they did not settle up-country, considering that they did so later on in the time of Alexander, is a far-reaching question; but the fact that they did not do so considerably simplifies our problem. For the sea is the natural highway; and for the City-State economist communications will naturally mean (*pace* M. Bérard) almost exclusively sea communications.

I pass to the more difficult question of the general historical background; this raises a troublesome problem of method. Can there be such a thing as an historical background? Ought we not rather, instead of framing large historical generalizations, to aim at describing the work and development of City-State life? In fact, is it not contrary to all current conceptions of history, a sin against the historical sense, to attempt to describe as static and permanent forces that every historian knows are in constant

change and movement? It is these arguments, or as I would rather call them, instincts on the part of students of antiquity which have hitherto stood in the way of the method of economic inquiry for which I am pleading. Scholars who occupy themselves with ancient economic phenomena and the historical conditions out of which they took their rise have been aiming, not at a political economy of antiquity, but at what is a very different thing, at economic history. Let me quote one of the most recent and thoughtful German writers. 'The next task before us . . . is a history of the development of the Polis economy. True, the day in which it will be possible to write this is still very distant.' It is very distant; and to call it the 'next task' is, I think, to show an imperfect appreciation of the complexity of the problem.

It is quite true that historical conditions are in constant change and movement. No single community and for that matter no single man is the same from one day to the next. But we have no right to assume that this change or movement necessarily marks either development or decadence, any more than we have a right to assume that the vagaries which may be indulged in by the economic men, and which are so disturbing in our application of economic reasoning, necessarily mark any moral or economic progress or regress. To speak then of the history of the development of the Polis Economy (*die*

Entwicklungsgeschichte der Stadtwirtschaft) is to make an unjustifiable assumption. If this history is to be merely a description of how the Polis Economy came to be what it was, of its youthful half-grown stages, describing, for instance, how money first came into general use, it may stand ; but in that case it is not relevant to our purpose. If it is intended to cover the ' Floruit ' of the City-State it has stultified itself by assuming what it should have set out to investigate. The method of economic science in dealing with men in single transactions, and *a fortiori* in dealing with nations over long periods, is to simplify the problem by eliminating disturbing elements (without inquiring whether they make for development or decadence) and to aim first at reaching certain preliminary statical conclusions. Let me again at the risk of being tedious quote a passage from the preface of Marshall (p. ix). ' Some discussions as to the methods of social sciences have seemed to imply that statics and dynamics are distinct branches of physics. But of course they are not. The modern mathematician is familiar with the notion that dynamics include physics. If he can solve a problem dynamically he seldom cares to solve it statically also. To get the statical solution from the dynamical all that is needed is to make the relative velocities of the things under study equal to zero, and thus reduce them to relative rest. But the statical solution

has claims of its own. It is simpler than the dynamical; it may afford useful preparation and training for the more difficult dynamical solution; and it may be the first step towards a provisional and partial solution in problems so complex that a complete dynamical solution is beyond our attainment.' I want to emphasize this point particularly, not only because it is a point of current controversy between students of present-day economics, but because the endeavour to reach what Marshall calls 'dynamical solutions' without undertaking the preliminary statical work, without a proper analysis of the forces whose movement and velocity are being investigated, has, I think, been the main reason why the study of ancient economics is still in so backward a condition. Pöhlmann, for instance, who has made social conditions in the Greek world his special subject of study, has written an elaborate book on *The History of Ancient Socialism and Communism*. It is a monument of learning and its footnotes abound in interesting and suggestive references. Yet the book has lain comparatively neglected by students of antiquity—at any rate in England. Why? Because its author is trying to work dynamically; trying to find a law of development and decay running through City-State society. And he is so intent on the forces making for development and decay that hardly anything else finds a place in his pages, and the

reader who lays it down is so sated and sickened with narratives of social revolutions that he remembers only with an effort that the Athenians who clamoured for *σεισαχθεία* under Solon and raised money by bringing a rich general to trial in the fourth century, were the same people who built the Parthenon, evolved the Funeral Speech of Pericles, and even in their decadence listened to Plato and Demosthenes and built the theatre of Dionysus. One turns back with relief from travelling dynamically in Professor Pöhlmann's express train to the stillness and simplicity of a Platonic or Aristotelian Utopia. Here at least is harmony and proportion, and Greek life, not as it was, but as it might and could have been. If the elements for which we are seeking are really there, it is far easier to put them in motion than to reduce Pöhlmann's Bacchanalian riot to stillness.

We are justified then in asking our economist to give us a general historical background, to give us a picture of the social and political condition of the communities whose economic life he is setting out to describe. For it is only through the study of these conditions that he himself can know with what problems he will be called upon to deal. A writer set down to ancient economics without knowing whether the Greeks had railways would not get very far in his task. But there is a further point. It is only through the study of these historical and

social conditions that he can know the relative significance of the problems with which he will be called upon to deal. And this question of relative importance or perspective is of extreme importance, for it will dictate the whole form and arrangement of his treatise. And in a work of this sort form and arrangement, the selection of the right problems to work out in the right order of importance, counts for a very great deal; in fact it is the order and arrangement of modern books on economics, which naturally put industrial questions in the front place, that has led men to think that political economy applies solely to modern industrial conditions.

I have only space to give one instance of what I mean. What is the relative importance in the normal City-State of agriculture, trade, industry, war and private robbery as sources for the acquisition of wealth? This is clearly a question of extreme importance: for on it depends in what order and in what detail land, trade, industry and war are to be dealt with. I need hardly say that it is still quite an open question; with the exception of Francotte I do not think any writer has ever attempted to deal with it systematically.

We are concerned then with a normal City-State (like the economic man or the 'representative firm' of the modern economist), and we start with a general knowledge of its geographical and social conditions.

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